

**1000 CURIOSITIES OF BRITAIN**



# 1000 CURIOS OF BRIT

*by*  
EGON JAMN

*With a Foreword and Photo*

*by*  
GEORGE LC

LONDON:  
HERBERT JOSEPH

FIRST PUBLISHED IN 1937



## FOREWORD

**H**ERE is another book about Britain, and one that is packed with interesting facts. It is very fitting that it should have appeared in the Coronation Year, when we are welcoming a large number of foreign guests to our shores—for this is just the book for every tourist, whether native or foreigner.

Although Great Britain is but a tiny island, so small that on world maps it seems but a speck in the ocean, there are many who regard it as the world's most wonderful island.

No land has had more influence on the modern world, and it is the heart and nerve centre of a mighty empire, upon which the sun never sets, a territory devoted to the ideals of peace, freedom, and progress.

It is a very ancient land, and yet it is exceedingly up to date, and its modern wonders perhaps exceed in interest its historic monuments.

Is it not remarkable that so small a country should contain the world's mightiest city, and at the time of writing holds the record for speed on land, sea and air?

Most of the great inventions which have made the modern world were discovered by Englishmen—the steam engine, the railway train, the principle of the dynamo (which gave us the electric age) and numerous spinning and weaving machines.

Our modern wonders to-day include the world's finest underground railway system, the finest ship, the biggest docks, whether floating or graving, the biggest battleship, the fastest railway train and the longest non-stop run.

Records, however, are sometimes shortlived, so that some of the above statements may not remain true for long, but if some are lost others may be set up.

We have spoken of wonders, but the keynote of this book is *Curiosities*, and Mr. Jameson has assembled a remarkable collection. An American writer once stated that "England is like a house where nothing is ever thrown away," and certainly we can show an astonishing selection of rare and curious relics of the past. There are grim reminders of the harsh justice of bygone days: Pillories, in which a pinioned victim was pelted by brutal crowds, stocks and whipping posts, the "village cage," a lock-up with no windows and a floor of cold earth, gibbets upon which the corpses of hanged criminals were exhibited as a ghastly warning.

## FOREWORD

There are picturesque survivals from the Merrie England of mediaevalism, Mummers and Morris Dancers, the May Queen and her retainers, Hock Tide at Hungerford, Bonfire Celebrations in many towns, Well Dressing, Egg Rolling, and many more.

Not the least impressive of our treasures are the relics of the succeeding civilizations which have held sway in our land, the mighty walls of Imperial Rome, the rude churches of the Saxon period, the glorious fanes of mediaeval Christianity, and the mansions and manor-houses of the Tudor era.

Mr. Jameson has collected a fascinating selection of legends of the devil and all his works. The Enemy of Souls seems to have owned a great deal of property in Britain, but we expect that—like other bad landlords—he is an absentee.

It is interesting to observe that the fiend of mediaevalism was a curious combination of wickedness and stupidity, as is well illustrated in the story of the Devil's Dyke. Here is a malignant being who would work for the devastation of a whole countryside, and yet could be scared from his purpose by an old woman's farthing dip.

Quite as interesting, and far more historic, are the stories which the Author has collected of the Pilgrim Fathers. We join in his admiration of these magnificent pioneers, who dared to cross the mighty ocean in search of liberty of conscience, and so became the founders of the world's most powerful nation, and one which is devoted to democratic ideals.

But why say any more? This is Mr. Jameson's book, and you must read it to discover what are the THOUSAND CURIOSITIES of Britain. It will teach you much about our country.

The illustrations, which help to tell the story, are all my own work, and some of those portraying ancient Inns are reproduced from my new book, "*English Inns and Roadhouses*," by kind permission of the publishers, Messrs. T. Werner Laurie Ltd.

GEORGE LONG.

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# 1,000 CURIOSITIES OF BRITAIN

## CHAPTER I

### THE OLDEST, THE EARLIEST AND THE LARGEST

**T**HE earliest recorded inhabitant of Britain was called Eolithicus.

He lived 500,000 years ago—that is some 6,666 generations back—and his dwelling place was in the hills near Cromer, Norfolk.

The oldest church is St. Martin's Church, Canterbury, for which some also claim the distinction of antedating all other churches in Europe.

The largest and most stately castle ruins in the British Isles are those of the Castle of Framlingham, in Suffolk, on the banks of the Ore.

This castle, dating from Saxon times, lies to the north of the town. One can get a good idea, from what still remains of this ancient monument, of the tremendous size of the castle when at the height of its glory.

As far back as 1176 there is a record of its being razed to the ground and subsequently rebuilt. For a long time it served as the residence of the powerful family of the Howards, Dukes of Norfolk.

After the death of Edward VI., Queen Maria chose this as her place of retirement.

The finest specimens of Roman remains are to be found in the city of Bath—they are, appropriately enough, the Roman Baths. One is filled with warm healing water by the same spring as the Romans used.

Dr. Haverfield says that "Bath is probably the best-named city in England."

The oldest inhabited house in Britain is claimed to be the Fighting Cocks Inn, at St. Albans (of which a fuller account is given in the chapter on Inns).

The most ancient city in England is Chester.

The greatest wonder of Britain is Stonehenge, near Salisbury Plain. Of this most notable antiquity the poet Michael Drayton wrote:—

"Where she, of all the Plaines of Britaine, that doth beare  
The name to be the first (renowned everiewhere)  
Hath worthily obtained that Stonendge there should stand  
The first of Plaines, and that first wonder of the land."

## 11,000 CURIOSITIES OF BRITAIN

This prehistoric stone circle consists of an outer and an inner ring of stones, of which there were originally thirty, but only sixteen now remain, the tallest of them being  $21\frac{1}{2}$  feet high.

"The most wonderful city in the world"—at least so Ditchfield wrote at the beginning of his book, *The City of London*—"is London."

One of the most photographed houses in Great Britain is the Old Bridge House, Ambleside, near Lake Windermere, Westmorland; another is the "Smallest house," at Conway.

The largest slate quarries in the world are those at Penrhyn.

The longest sub-aqueous tunnel is that under the Mersey between Liverpool and Birkenhead. The structure has an external diameter of  $46\frac{1}{2}$  feet and an internal diameter of 44 feet.

The longest tunnel in the world is perhaps the Golders Green—Morden tunnel on the Tube Railway in London.

Liverpool claims two further records: the largest cold store in Europe, the Union Cold Storage plant, and also the largest warehouse in the world. This is near the Collingwood Dock, and with its 14 stories has an aggregate area of 36 acres of floor-space.

The commercial centre of the world's greatest industrial region is Manchester, known also far and wide by its nickname of "Cottonopolis."

The largest railway station in Britain is Waterloo Station in London; and the largest underground railway station, also in London, is Piccadilly Circus.

The greatest lighthouse in the world is at Lizard Point in Cornwall: the Lizard light, which throws a beam every four seconds, is visible 25—60 miles away.

The world's largest air port is at Croydon, and the world's largest coal shipping port is Cardiff.

The most beautiful dance-hall in the world, with room for 10,000 people, is the "Palace" at Douglas, in the Isle of Man.

The largest park in the British Isles, and one of the largest in the whole world, is Phoenix Park, Dublin. It is almost twice as large as Hyde Park and Regent's Park put together, including as it does 1760 acres of woodland. This wonderful park was laid out in the reign of Charles II.

The highest chimney in the world belongs to Townsend's factory at Glasgow, but the highest tower in England is the central tower, crowned by its spire, of the Cathedral of St. Mary at Salisbury. This, furthermore, was formerly the only English cathedral whose architecture was all of one period; its graceful spire is regarded as one of the most wonderful in the world.

The Church built at the highest altitude in Britain is that at Hindlow, Derbyshire,  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles south of Buxton.

The two highest inhabited houses are "The Traveller's Rest" in

## THE OLDEST, THE EARLIEST AND THE LARGEST

the little, old town of Ambleside, near Windermere, and Kirkstone Top, on the Kirkstone Pass, likewise in Westmorland.

An old ballad tells us that

Skiddaw, Lanvelling and Casticand  
Are the highest hills in all England!

But the highest mountain in the British Isles is Ben Nevis, in Scotland.

The most easterly town in Britain is the North Sea port, Lowestoft, Suffolk, far famed for its herrings.

The most easterly point in Britain is marked by a lighthouse: Ness Point, near Lowestoft.

The most southerly point in England is Lizard Point in Cornwall, and, nearby, the most westerly point of England is Land's End, Cornwall, called Bolerium by the Romans.

At Sennen, on the English Channel near Land's End, there is a hotel which rightly styles itself "The First and Last Hotel in England." The first and last house in England is situated on the extreme Land's End Point (Cornwall). There is another in the Scottish border country, on the Jedburgh—Newcastle road.

The most westerly Christian stronghold in the ancient world was the Great Skellig at Valencia Island, Kerry.

The point on the English coast nearest to France is marked by the lighthouse at Dungeness, near Lydd, in Kent.

There is one British island which has but one house on it: this is Jethou, one of the Channel Islands.

The wettest spot in all Britain is to be found in Borrowdale, Cumberland. There the little village of Seathwaite, near Keswick, boasts a rainfall totalling 150 inches in a year.

Among the loveliest villages in England are Eardisland on the Arrow in Herefordshire, Chipping Camden in Gloucestershire, Broadway in Worcestershire, Gasworth in Cheshire, Bywell in Northumberland, Castle Coombe and Lacock in Wiltshire, Clovelly in Devonshire, and Selworthy, near Minehead.

The best-known beautiful view in Britain is the far-famed vista from Richmond Hill, looking up the Thames valley.

One of the three or four most lovely views in the whole of Europe, according to Ruskin, is that from Friar's Crag on Derwentwater in Cumberland.

Here a stone slab has been set up, with a bronze medallion of Ruskin's head, and the inscription below is taken from his writings and tell us:

"The first thing which I remember as an event in life was being taken by my nurse to the brow of Friar's Crag on Derwentwater."

Another famous view is that from Snaefell, Isle of Man. From here one can survey the whole south coast of Scotland from the

## 1,000 CURIOSITIES OF BRITAIN

Mull of Galloway to the Solway Firth; southwards the mountains of Cumberland and Westmorland, the Snowdon range in Wales, and westwards the Mourne Mountains in Ireland.

The "Paradise of England" is said to be Taunton, at the head of the long vale of Taunton Deane.

The wildest of Britain's inhabited valleys is the Vale of Westwater, Wasdale Head, Cumberland. The most beautiful, shut in by lovely hills, is Wharfedale, near Bolton Abbey, a village in the West Riding of Yorkshire.

The most beautiful rocks are in Skye, Inverness-shire: "The Storr," 2,360 feet high, and Quiraing, at the extreme end of the island, 1,779 feet high; on its summit is a kind of crater.

Michael Drayton, in his poem "*Poly-Olbion*" wrote:

"At Giggleswick, where I a fountain can you show  
That eight times in a day is said to ebb and flow!"

He refers to the Ebbing and Flowing Well near Giggleswick in the West Riding of Yorkshire.

The finest rooms in Britain are the state apartments in Windsor Castle.

With the passing of Chesterfield House, the London Home of the Earl of Harewood in South Audley Street, Hyde Park, the metropolis lost her most stately suite of rooms. Incidentally it was in this mansion—now replaced by a block of modern flats—that French cooking was introduced into England by La Chapelle, the illustrious and accomplished chef of Louis XIV.

The most picturesque of England's stately old homes is the manor house at Compton Wynyates, in Warwickshire. It lies romantically in a beautiful valley, and was built by Sir William Compton in the reign of Henry VIII. The magnificent suites were built round a large quadrangular court, and among the eighty sumptuously furnished apartments one still can see Henry VIII's bedroom and Charles I's room. The present owner is the Marquess of Northampton.

The English essayist, Joseph Addison, once wrote: "A certain street of the greatest credit in Europe is Lombard Street, London."

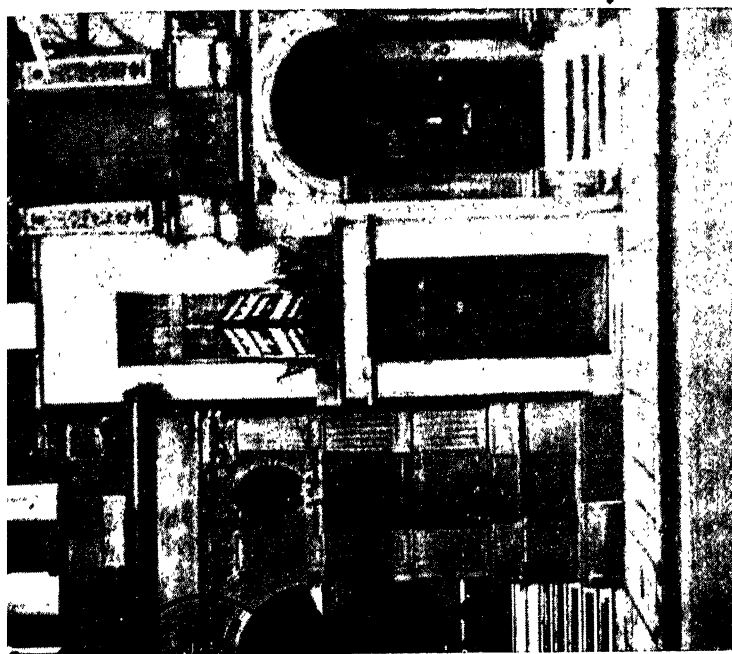
"No. 1, London," is Apsley House, Hyde Park Corner, the residence of the Duke of Wellington. But you will probably agree that the most famous address in the world is "10 Downing Street," London, S.W.1. Since 1735 this has been the official residence of the Prime Minister of England.

The most famous of all streets is, surely, Piccadilly, London, W.1.

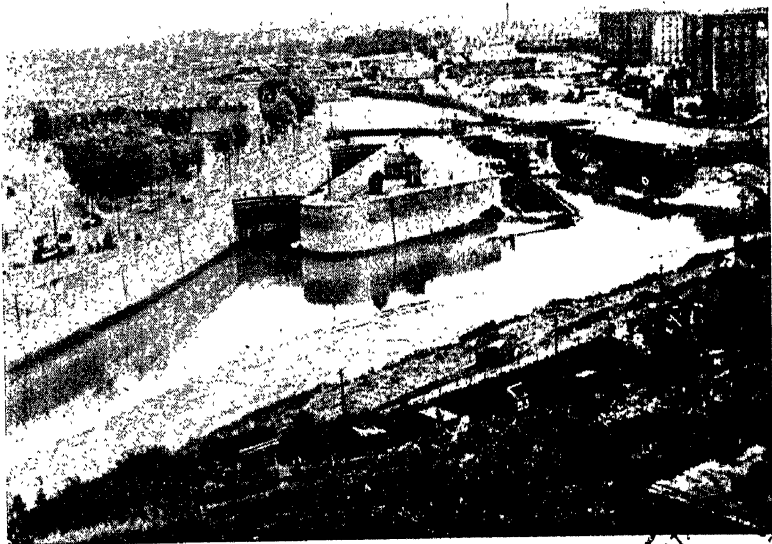
Perhaps the narrowest street in Britain is Nelson Street, at King's Lynn, near Norfolk. Here you can shake hands through the window with your neighbour across the street; but Parliament Street,



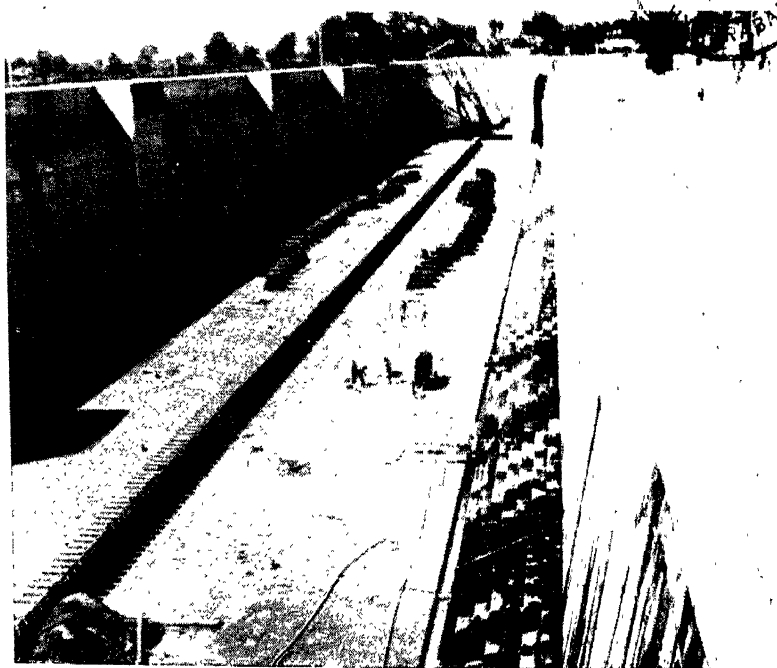
I. THE SMALLEST HOUSE IN GREAT BRITAIN,  
CONWAY, N. WALES



II. THE SMALLEST HOUSE IN LONDON



III. FLOATING HARBOUR, BRISTOL



IV. KING GEORGE GRAVING DOCK, THE LARGEST IN THE WORLD

### THE OLDEST, THE EARLIEST AND THE LARGEST

Exeter, is only two feet two inches wide at its narrow end where it enters the High Street.

The holiest spot in Britain is the Collegiate Church of Saint Peter.

You may well ask where this church is, for who ever heard it called "Collegiate?"

It is none other than Westminster Abbey, London.

## CHAPTER II

### ANOMALIES AND MISCONCEPTIONS

THE historical records of Britain contain a number of amusing gaps which historians have tried to bridge with all manner of clever devices. In many cases their researches, and the deductions they have drawn from them, have led to contradictory conclusions, while the man in the street has continued to stick to his own opinions.

As the years have passed, each generation, weaving together the products of its own imagination and of long-cherished local traditions, has supplemented the account given by the chronicler.

Thus have arisen discrepancies in the explanations of some of the unearthed remains, dates and events which belong to the past history of Britain. It is only natural that each has stoutly upheld his own pet theory, giving rise to the bloodless but at the same time heated "battle of the historians."

In the village of Gosforth, on the River Bleng in Cumberland, there is a far-famed Runic cross, a monolith of red sandstone standing some fifteen feet high. It is one of the most valuable cruciform monuments in Europe; that much is certain.

Some maintain that, at least as far as the carving on its stem is concerned, it has some connection with Scandinavian mythology, whereas others see in this cross the symbol of the Roman Catholic Faith.

Equally obscure is the significance of the two letters "I.H." carved outside the Wash-House-Court of the Charterhouse, in Charterhouse Square, near Holborn, London.

This picturesque group of centuries-old houses lies, like an enchanted island, withdrawn from the hurly-burly of the great metropolis which lies all about it. Even those who have most carefully studied the history of this corner of the city have not been able to find any convincing clue to the significance of these two letters.

Five hundred and fifty years ago an area here was set aside as the burial place of victims of the great plague: later, the Charter Monastery (derived from the French "Chartreuse") was founded and erected here.

When, fifty years later, Henry VIII suppressed the monastery, the property fell forfeit to the Crown and was subsequently presented to the Duke of Norfolk, who used the site for his town residence. But even in this changeful history no one to whom these initials could be ascribed played any prominent part: nor were



## ANOMALIES AND MISCONCEPTIONS

they those of the Elizabethan worthy who, at the beginning of the 17th century, bought the mansion and converted it into a school for the young and a retreat for the aged needy.

About 1890 the school was transferred to Godalming, in Surrey, leaving only the old people behind in Charterhouse Square (*see also* "Schools"). Those who are interested in the doings of the old men who lived there are recommended to read Thackeray's "*Newcomes*." The author himself was educated at the school and he faithfully portrays the life lived in his day in this peaceful corner of London. But he offers no elucidation of the mystery of the "I.H."

Some have suggested that it is all that remains of the monogram of Christ, "I.H.S.," while others say that it refers to Prior Houghton, who once held office here.

Another controversy has arisen over the derivation of the name "Dodman Point." The Dodman is a bold headland which rears itself 379 feet above the English Channel on the south coast of Cornwall, near the village of St. Gorrán. The learned maintain that "Dodman" comes from the old Cornish words "Duadh Maen," which, they tell you, must be translated as "Stone Point." But the simple-minded inhabitants, of course, know better: they can tell you, down to the last sensational detail, the life-story of the wicked man who once lived here and, as a punishment for his misdeeds, was turned to stone. "Dodman," according to them, is merely another form of "dead man."

A similar dispute rages round the uncertain origin of the "Hurlers" of St. Cleer, likewise in Cornwall, two and a half miles north of Liskeard. These "Hurlers" tower skywards from the midst of a group of other ante-Druidical remains, including the granite Trethery Stone, another monument to long-forgotten days. Originally there were three correlated circles, bearing from N.N.E. to S.S.W.

A Latin inscription on a certain stone has to answer for a great deal of brain-racking and headache among the scholars of Britain. The stone was dug up by workmen in the year 1723, when they were excavating the site for a house in North Street, Chichester. The "Pudens Stone," as it is called, is assumed to have formed part, originally, of a temple of Neptune and Minerva. In its present mutilated form the inscription now reads as follows:

" eptuno et Minervae  
Templum  
O Salute De Divinae  
auctorita Claud  
Gidubni, Fabror et qui in fo  
C.D.S.D. Donante aream  
Ente Pudentini fil."

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All manner of interpretations have been suggested for this inscription; the bulk of opinion favours one or other of the two following translations given by scholars.

1. "This temple was erected to Neptune and Minerva for the preservation of the Imperial family, on the authority of Tiberius Claudius Cogidubnus, King Legate of Augustus in Britain, at the sole cost of the Guild of Artificers, and those in it who attend to sacred things. Clemens son of Pudentinus gave the site."
2. "The College of Artificers and they who preside over sacred rites or hold office there, by the authority of King Cogidubnus, legate of Tiberius Claudius Augustus in Britain, dedicated this temple to Neptune and Minerva for the welfare of the Imperial Family, Puders, the son of Pudentinus, giving the ground."

Probably the College of Artificers was a company of smiths or shipbuilders who worshipped Neptune and Minerva as their tutelary deities. It may, of course, also be that this "Pudens, son of Pudentinus," was the British Christian, a disciple of St. Paul, referred to in the closing words of the great missionary's Epistle to Timothy.

However that may be, anyone can see the stone for himself and draw his own conclusions: it is to be found in North Street, Chichester.

An inscription over the doorway of the Court House at Llanvair Discoed, in Monmouthshire, furnishes us with another puzzle. It reads: "Er i fod yn ing, man' en well yn wag." The only thing of which we can be certain is that the language is Welsh. One version of its meaning is given as: "Although it is narrow, it is pleasant to be here."

Apart from these obscurities and uncertainties, one finds up and down the country a number of definite errors which have become current in spite of the fact that the truth has long been established. In most cases a mistaken theory has somehow been spread abroad and has been handed on as truth.

One of the most glaring examples is the generally accepted origin of Cleopatra's Needle, which stands on the Victoria Embankment in London.

Who would dream of questioning its connection with Queen Cleopatra?

And yet this is very far from correct; this huge granite obelisk dates from the days of Thothmes III, who erected it at Heliopolis, about fifteen hundred years before Christ. It was presented to the British nation in the year 1819, although it was not actually erected in London until 1878.

Now Cleopatra, as every school-boy and girl knows, was a con-

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temporary of Julius Caesar; that is, she lived about 1,450 years later than Thothmes III. There is, incidentally, a second Cleopatra's Needle, which stands in Central Park, New York.

In the market place at Sandbach, in Cheshire, there are two old crosses; one is 16 feet 8 inches high and the other 11 feet, 11 inches. The faces of these monuments are covered with rude figures and scrolls of foliage.

The "*Catholic Magazine*" explains that these crosses were set up in the year 608, when Penda returned as a Christian convert from Northumberland, attended by four priests who had been deputed to preach the Gospel throughout his dominions.

Others, however, maintain that King Ossa of Northumberland erected these crosses as a thank-offering when the son of King Penda of Mercia was converted to Christianity on his marriage to Oswi's daughter.

But there are many antiquarians who will laugh these theories to scorn, telling you that there is unmistakable evidence that these monuments could not in any case have stood here for as long as a thousand years, so that all this talk of Penda and his missionaries is quite beside the point.

Another widespread error is the assertion that Johnson's Court, off Fleet Street in London, takes its name from the famous lexicographer Samuel Johnson. Admittedly he did live there from 1765 until 1776, but it was in fact already known as Johnson's Court before then. It happens to have been named after another Johnson who lived as long ago as the sixteenth century.

Many maps give the name of the desecrated church of Bix, near Henley, in Oxfordshire, as "Bix Gibwen," another inaccuracy. The real name of this house of worship is "Bixbrand." The Church of St. Michael which formerly stood on the site was called "Byxgwybyn," but this was destroyed long ago and every vestige of it has now disappeared.

On the house numbered 37 Wood Street, Cheapside, London, there is a tablet with the inscription: "Here the Great Fire broke out"—rather a misleading statement, since the house thus indicated was not built till a much later date.

On the façade of the Church of Denton, in Lancashire, is a tablet which reads: "Erected by Edward IV." This too is a misstatement, as is that given on yet another tablet in Panyer Alley, in the E.C.4 district of London, which announces:

"When you have sought the city round  
Yet still this is the highest ground.  
August the 27th 1688."

This is by no means the highest point in the City of London: to find it one must go to Cornhill, in the E.C.3 district.

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All sorts of mistaken ideas have been prevalent about the derivation of the name "Hackney" carriage. According to some Londoners these vehicles got their name from the fact that the first public carriages to be hired in London, in the 1625, plied between Piccadilly Circus and the north-eastern suburb of Hackney. The inhabitants of Maitland in Northumberland exploded this theory when, after a hotly-contested dispute, they established the fact that the Hackney carriage has nothing at all to do with that particular suburb of London, deriving its name only from the French *haqunée*, meaning an ambling, slow-paced nag.

In the church of the little village of Fairford, near Yarnton Junction in Gloucestershire, famous for its fishing, the verger will proudly point out a picture attributed to the famous artist, Albrecht Dürer. It is a pity to have to contradict, but it was, of course, not painted by him.

At Abington, a suburb of Northampton, there is an Abington Abbey. Strange as it may seem, this building never had any ecclesiastical connections: for two hundred years it was the residence of the Thursby family. They subsequently sold it to Lord Overstone, whose daughter, Lady Wantage, now lives at the Abbey.

Historians are at a loss to name the birthplace of the first Prince of Wales. Edward II was born on April 25th, 1284, the fourth child of Edward I and his wife Eleanor of Castile. He was only a few months old when his elder brother died and he thus succeeded to the title of Prince of Wales.

A room in the Eagle Tower of Carnarvon Castle is shown as the room where he was born—whence his title Edward "of Carnarvon," but it is by no means certain that he was brought into the world there.

There is equal uncertainty in locating the place where Alexander Pope first saw the light of day. He is said to have been born in London on May 21st, 1688, his father being a linen-draper who, after carrying on his business with some success, was able to retire, about the year 1700, to Birfield, in Windsor Forest. This is all that is known for certain; those who have gone more deeply into the question indicate Lombard Street as the place of his birth, but they have hitherto failed to produce any convincing proof of their claim.

In contrast to this, no less than four places have been named as the birth-place of the famous actress, Nell Gwynn, also famous as Charles II's mistress. The first is a house in Gwynn Street, Hereford; the second one in Pope Lane, in the same city. The third aspirant to the honour is Oxford, for no less an authority than the antiquary and genealogist Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe wrote: "When I first went to Oxford, St. John Ireland, an antiquary, assured me that Nelly was born in Oxford. He named the parish,

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but I have forgotten it. It is certain that two of her son's titles—Headington and Burford—were taken from Oxfordshire localities."

And the fourth and last claimant is Coal Yard, Drury Lane, in London.

Moreover the beautiful Nelly boasts two birthdays—ascribed to her by different biographers. Some say she was born on February 2nd, 1650, whilst others fix the event a year later, on February 2nd, 1651. Some state that her father was a broken-down soldier whose family was of Welsh extraction and who used to send his daughter into the foyer of the Drury Lane Theatre to sell oranges to the elegant patrons of that playhouse. Another school has demonstrated that Papa Gwynn was himself a fruit dealer at Covent Garden Market, whilst yet others describe him as a romantic captain. But all these discrepancies are perfectly natural of a period when there were no hosts of press reporters, news reels and broadcasts to settle the question of what happened for all time through the printed word, the film and the radio.

Of Nell's mother even less is recorded. She is believed to have been called Eleanore, but of her maiden-name nothing is known. Mrs. Gwynn lived for a time with her famous daughter, but eventually drowned herself in a pond near Neat House, Chelsea—or tumbled in when drunk.

Similar obscurity shrouds the birthplace of Robert Bruce, later King of Scotland. No one can say with any degree of certainty where the house is which sheltered his cradle. Historians have claimed that it was at Hart, in Durham, but popular tradition has it that the son of the 7th Robert de Bruce, Earl of Carrick, was born on July 11th, 1274, at Turnberry, on the coast of Ayrshire, in the castle belonging to his mother, Dame Marjorie, daughter of Neil, Earl of Carrick.

At any rate, it is known that Robert Bruce was eighth in the direct line of male descent from a Norman baron who came to England with William the Conqueror. Little is known of his boyhood, though it is assumed that he was brought up at the court of Edward I, where he could see and learn everything that a reigning monarch should know.

Many books give London as the birthplace of Elizabeth Moulton Barrett. It is of course well established that she lived near the Thames with her husband, Robert Browning, but she was actually born at Coxhoe, in Durham. In this case the error may have arisen from the fact that she never wrote anything about her native village.

In most history books the year of King Alfred the Great's death is given as 901. The correct date, however, is to be found on his monument at Winchester, namely 899.

On the Isle of Man, one of the sights is King Orry's Grave. The

## 1,000 CURIOSITIES OF BRITAIN

inhabitants may well smile, for they know that King Orry's bones were never buried there: according to them the grave is that of a Scandinavian king whose name was long ago forgotten. But the scientists have the last laugh; they have long since proved that this is the last resting place not of a monarch, but of a—horse!

Where exactly was it that Edmund, King of East Anglia, met his death in 870? And what of his descent? There are those who claim to be able to prove that he was a German, descended from old Saxon stock and born at Nuremberg, in Germany, the town famous for the Meistersingers—and the Nazi party celebrations.

Even the place where he had his royal residence is not known with certainty: though it is sometimes supposed to have been the city of Burna.

The inhabitants of Bures St. Mary, on the Stour in Suffolk, have for a long time put forward the claim that their town was built on the site of the old Burna.

Galfidus de Fontibus, after giving the above information, also describes the whole course of the coronation ceremonies which were held, on December 25th, 855, in a Church which is supposed to have stood three quarters of a mile to the north of the present Bures St. Mary. But the last fourteen years of his life and his reign retreat again into obscurity. It is, however, known that in 870, the Danes, having spent the winter at York, marched through Mercia to East Anglia and made their headquarters at Thetford. King Edmund made a stand against the invaders twenty miles south-east of their camp, at Hoxne, in Suffolk, and challenged them to a decisive battle. The Danes, led by their resourceful generals Ubba and Ybguar, vanquished Edmund's troops.

And now for the biggest bone of contention among historians. What happened after this defeat? Tradition has it that Edmund fell, alive, into the hands of his enemies. They dragged him to an oak tree and, having bound him to it, commanded him to abjure the Christian faith. When he refused to be moved by their threats, they shot at him with arrows. The Abbot of Fleury, St. Edmund's oldest biographer, writing a hundred years later, gives this account of the events which followed the battle, and he pledges himself to their truthfulness. He claims to have heard the story from Dunstan, who himself actually received it from the lips of Edmund's own standard-bearer.

The King's corpse was then, it was said, taken to Beadorices-worth—or, as it is called to-day, Bury St. Edmunds. And there his supposed grave soon became one of the most popular of shrines for pilgrimage in Europe. On the very spot where he suffered martyrdom, near the bridge of Hoxne, there stands a cross which bears the inscription: "St. Edmund, King and Martyr,

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November 20th, A.D. 870. Oak Tree fell August, 1848, by its own weight."

Equally uncertain is the place where King Arthur is supposed to have been buried. It is generally assumed that he was buried by the monks of Glastonbury, in Somerset, near the Holy Thorn. When, as long ago as 1191, they excavated his coffin, they found it, so the story goes, between two sculptured pyramids. Giraldus Cambrensis actually claims to have been an eye-witness of the exhumation, saying that at a depth of seven feet they found a stone and a heavy iron cross with the inscription :

"Here lies buried in the island of  
Avalonia, the renowned King Arthur."

Nine feet lower they came upon a coffin of hollowed oak and when they opened it up they found that it contained the skeletons of the King and of his Queen Guinevere. His bones, which were of gigantic size, were then laid in a sarcophagus of black marble and reinterred in the centre of the Presbytery. Subsequent investigators, however, have searched in vain for this black marble tomb.

Nobody knows exactly how Richard II died. Some believe that after being taken prisoner at Pontefract, being unaccustomed to exposure to the rigours of winter, he succumbed. Thomas Walsingham and Raphael Holinshed describe the last days and hours of this unhappy monarch much more dramatically, and Shakespeare followed their version in writing his play on the subject. In Holinshed's Chronicles of Richard II we read :

"The common fame is, that he was everie daie served at the table with costlie meat, like a king, to the intent, that no creature should suspect anie thing done contrarie to the order taken in the parliament, and when the meat was set before him, he was forbidden once to touch it, yea, he was not permitted so much as to smell of it, and so he died of forced famine. But Thomas Walsingham is so farre from imputing his death to compulsorie famine, that he referreth it altogether to voluntarie pining of himselfe. For when he heard that the complots and attempts of such his favourers, as sought his restitution."

He then describes how a knight with eight strong persons from the court came to the prison and said to his warders : "Let him eat now, since he won't be able to do so much longer !"

"King Richard sat down to dinner, and was served without courtesie or assaie, whereupon much marvelling at the sudden change, he demanded of the esquier when he did not his duty. 'Sir (said he), I am otherwise commanded by sir Piers of Exton, which is newlie come from K. Henrie.'"

"When King Richard heard that word, he tooke the kerving knife in his hand, and strake the esquier on the head, saing :

'The divell take Henrie of Lancaster and thee together!' And with that word, sir Piers entred the chamber, well armed, with eight tall men likewise armed, everie of them having a bill in his hand."

And so he was murdered.

The chronicle then proceeds thus :

"It is said, that sir Piers of Exton, after he had thus slaine him, wept bitterlie, as one stricken with the prickle of a giltie conscience, for murdering him, whom he had so long time obeied as king."

But there is a contradictory tradition, according to which it was a bogus King Richard who was buried in Westminster Abbey. The real Richard II is supposed to have escaped, undiscovered, from his prison and made his way to Scotland, where he found protection and lived to enjoy many carefree years.

Various opinions are also current as to the burial place of the British adventurer, poet and historian, Sir Walter Raleigh. Before his dates one finds the familiar 'c'—circa, indicating uncertainty as to the exact period of his lifetime.

His father was Raleigh of Fardell, in the parish of Cornwood, a country gentleman—though somewhat down on his luck—who came of an old-established family. He had been married no less than three times, Walter being the child of his third marriage with Catherine, daughter of Sir Philip Champernown of Modbury, and widow of Otho Gilbert of Compton.

She presented her second husband with three sons, and it may be that in the confusion of all these children the exact year of Walter's birth was somehow forgotten or mislaid. It is said that he came into the world in a farmer's house at Hayes, near the head of Budleigh Salterton Bay, on the coast of Devonshire, between Exmouth and Sidmouth. But while only one place—albeit somewhat diffidently—claims to be his birthplace, two places contend for the honour of guarding his grave, namely Waddon, near West Croydon, the London aerodrome, in Surrey, and the chancel of St. Margaret's Church, hard by Westminster Abbey in London. It is perhaps, only to be expected that in all the excitement occasioned by his execution on October 29th, 1618, nobody bothered much about what happened to his mutilated corpse.

A similar fate was that of the scholar and lawyer Sir Thomas Moore. He was, of course, executed for high treason. One of his "graves" is shown in Chelsea Old Church, Cheyne Walk, London.

The place where Oliver Cromwell is now buried is not known. Charles II is reported to have given orders for him to be exhumed and for his corpse to be impaled and subsequently thrown to the dogs.

Is his last burial place in Westminster Abbey or Newburgh



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Abbey or Naseby Field? Nor can anyone tell where the grave of the court painter, Hans Holbein, is to be found. He died after completing his portrait of Henry VIII in November, 1543, a victim of the great plague. But one can easily understand that in those days of horror and turmoil nobody troubled much about the graves of individuals, even though they might be King's favourites or world-famous artists. But more surprising is the fact that no one seems to know where he was born. It is probable that he was born in Germany in the year 1417, and Augsburg is mentioned as his birthplace. It is also surmised that he was buried in the Church of St. Catherine Cree, in Leadenhall Street, London.

In the cathedral Church of St. Werburgh, in Cheshire, you will be shown the grave of a German Emperor, Heinrich IV. This is in accord with a very old legend; but the man whose bones rest there was neither a German nor a sovereign.

He was a commoner named Henry Abbot.

And where is the grave of the one and only Robin Hood, the hero of youthful dreams and countless dramas, operas and folk-songs? In life he was Robert Fitzvoth, the misbegotten child of the Earl of Huntingdon, of Locksley in Nottinghamshire. He was born in 1160 and, until his death on November 28th, 1247, led a wild and adventurous life, dedicated to the cause of liberty. In Loxley, near Uttoxeter, Staffordshire, at Loxley Hall is preserved a horn, bearing the initials "R.H."

At the age of 87, persecuted by his infuriated enemies, he died in a Cistercian monastery at Kirkstall in Yorkshire. Tradition says that he went to the Priory for treatment when sick and was bled to death by the treacherous Prioress. Legend has it that he was buried under a tree, but the inhabitants of Whittington, Derbyshire, will show us a different grave.

In St. Giles' Church, Edinburgh, there is a stone with the inscription "J.K. 1572." This is popularly believed to be the gravestone of the Scottish reformer, John Knox; but nobody ventures to put forward the claim with absolute certainty. Unfortunately but little is known of the life of this worthy hero of Church history. He was the son of William Knox and his mother belonged to the Sinclair family; ancestors on both sides had fought under Bothwell's banner and their family seat was at Haddington.

Near St. Giles' Church a picturesque house is still shown as that in which John Knox lived, though this is questioned by many students. He is believed to have retired here in 1572 and there laid himself down to die on November 24th of that year.

No one knows how it was that King Alfred of England, formerly King of Wessex, met with his death. He was buried in the Church of Little Driffield, near Driffield in the East Riding

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of Yorkshire. Did he fall in battle against the Danes? Or did he die of a sickness brought on by his contemptuous disregard of the Papal injunctions in the matter of St. Wilfred?

All that is known is that he died on October 26th; presumably from sheer weakness. It has been assumed that it was in the year 900, or, as some maintain, it may have been in the year 901. He is supposed to have died in a secret hiding-place, at Willerby Wold, near Scarborough, in the East Riding of Yorkshire. His faithful followers then took his corpse to a cavern, which is also shown to this day. Later he was conveyed to the Monastery of Little Driffield, where Alfred's sister was Prioress.

During his lifetime he had fought side by side with his brother, King Ethelred, against the Danes, notably on January 8th, 871, at Ashdown.

And where is Ashdown?

Three places claim that they are the site of that battle; they are:

Alfred's Camp, near Ashdown Woods in Berkshire,

Ashton Upthorpe, Gloucestershire, and

The Heights above Blewbury, Berkshire.

In the tower of St. Mary Redcliffe, at Bristol, the rib of the Dun Cow killed by Guy Earl of Warwick is preserved. Closer inspection, however, has proved that this is actually the bone of a whale from the collection made by the great navigator, Sebastian Cabot.

On the pedestal of the monument erected to the Lord Mayor of London, William Beckford (1709—1770) in the Guildhall, London, the text is given of a speech made by him in the year 1770 in the presence of King George III. Actually, however, that speech was never made.

I suppose the most curious of all towns in England—no, in Scotland—well, to be on the safe side, in Great Britain, is Berwick-on-Tweed.

To be precise, Berwick-on-Tweed lies between England and Scotland!

In the dictionary gazetteer it is given as being in England, but in Kelly's newest Directory it is included in Scotland.

As a matter of fact, it forms a county all by itself.

## CHAPTER III

### REMARKABLE PEOPLE AND EPITAPHS

EVERY year, on Christmas Day, those who are especially partial to turkey, congregate at Boynton, near Carnaly in the East Riding of Yorkshire, at the grave of William Strickland, the world-wide traveller.

This same William Strickland returned to England just before Christmas, 1523, after a long voyage to America and back and invited all his friends to a marvellous banquet at mid-day on December 25th. The chief course at this festive meal was a fragrant and delicious roast, such as none of the guests had ever before tasted. It was, in fact, something which William Strickland had brought back with him from America as a special Christmas-tide surprise for his friends, the first turkey ever seen in Europe.

Ever since that time it has been the prevailing custom in England to eat turkey at the Christmas mid-day meal. And so it is only right and proper that the inventor of this excellent dish should be honoured on the anniversary of the introduction of this custom into our country.

By the way :

“Turkeys, Carps, Hoppes, Piccavel, and Beer  
Came into England all in one year !”

Another remarkable incident in the social history of this country was the sinking of a well, at the direction of an Indian Maharajah, to provide an adequate water-supply for the thirsty inhabitants of Stanton Harcourt, near Oxford. This Eastern potentate, who had lived in the neighbourhood for some years, heard the poor people round about complaining about the woeful shortage of water. They could not slake their thirst; they could not wash their clothes properly, nor could they get their water-mills to turn. Touched by their sorry plight, the foreign noblemen sent for a water-diviner.

An underground stream was thus discovered and a well sunk for the benefit of the people of the district. An oriental cupola surmounts this “Maharajah’s Well” and on it we may read :

“His Highness the Maharajah of Benares, India, gave this well.”  
In the year 1935, when staying in England, Haile Selassie, the

dispossessed Emperor of Abyssinia, planted a tree at Castle Wemyss, Renfrewshire, the seat of Lord Inverclyde. This tree is the last living symbol on British soil of the departed glory of the modern Lion of Judah.

The Briton of whom, perhaps, the greatest number of anecdotes have been told, was John Wakefield. He was elected Mayor of Castle Rising no less than 27 times, but he is remembered for another reason. His grave, in the churchyard of his native town, is a haunt still much visited by the votaries of humour and there they laughingly retell his jokes.

Izaak Walton has achieved undying fame as the author of "*The Compleat Angler*." He was born in 1593, of simple, rustic folk, and his christening mug is still shown in St. Mary's Church, Stafford. Later he lived in London, where he plied the trade of hosier, first in Fleet Street, and subsequently in Chancery Lane.

It was not until he was 60 years of age that his book was published. In the first edition only his initials, "I.W.," appear instead of the author's full name. Among his friends were Michael Drayton and Ben Jonson.

This "father of the angler's art" died in his son-in-law's house in 1683, at the age of 90. In Winchester Cathedral one may see his grave, surmounted by a monument with the following inscription:

Alas! Hee's gone before,  
Gone to returne noe more.  
Our panting breafths aspire  
After their aged Sire,  
Whose well-spent life did last  
Full ninety yeares and past,  
But now he hath begun  
That which will ne'er be done,  
Crowned with eternall blisse  
We wish our souls with his!  
Votos modestis sic  
flurent liberi.

Izaak Walton's friend, John Offley, to whom this great work was dedicated, also gained immortality thereby. He is buried at Madeley in Staffordshire.

Here is another case of a man, not himself an author, winning undying fame through a literary work. This time he is a famous statesman and, in fact, he was Queen Victoria's Prime Minister no less than five times.

But for all his political preoccupations he still found time to produce a work of high literary merit.

In the year 1863, Edward George Geoffrey Smith Stanley, 14th

## REMARKABLE PEOPLE AND EPITAPHS

Earl of Derby, astonished his friends by publishing a bulky volume of some two hundred pages, entitled, "*Translations of Poems, Ancient and Modern.*" It was dedicated in affectionate terms to his intimate friend and colleague in affairs of State, the Earl of Stanhope.

On the title-page, in place of the author's name, one reads, "Not published," and instead of that of the publisher, only the name of the printer is given: Hatchard & Co., 187, Piccadilly, London.

In this book, the famous statesman gives English renderings from the Latin of Catullus, the French of Milleroye and the German of Schiller, and at the beginning of the collection, the select and discriminating few amongst whom Lord Derby had this private edition circulated found a translation of the first Book of Homer's "*Iliad*" so delightful that they eventually prevailed upon him to put the remaining 23 books of this classic into English to complete this superb work.

And so, two years later, there duly appeared on the market, this time through the house of John Murray, an English version of the "*Iliad*," with a suitable dedication to Albert Edward, Prince of Wales.

This new translation caused a great sensation throughout the civilised world and completely independent critics from all quarters of the globe enthusiastically acclaimed the profound erudition, the fine taste and the deep sense of rhythm which characterised Lord Derby's work, ranking his "*Iliad*" above those of even the most famous of earlier translators of Homer.

Even George Chapman, Shakespeare's friend, with his superb Oxford-English, was overshadowed by the brilliance of the new translator; and Alexander Pope, who had worked at his own version from his 25th year onwards, failed to achieve the same measure of appreciation as did this scholar statesman. Subsequent translators, such as William Cowper, Gladstone, Colonel Muce, Newman, Wright, Matthew Arnold, Worsley and even the poet Laureate, Tennyson, failed to reach the high level attained by the Victorian premier.

Very different was the achievement which secured for another Briton the distinction of having a street in the vicinity of Oxford Street named after him and also the honour of a monument in Wsetminster Abbey.

This was Jonas Hanway, the first man to have the courage to walk through the streets of London with an umbrella. Until his day, it was not considered correct in Britain for any but ladies to make use of this protection against the weather.

But Mr. Hanway simply ignored the contemptuous gestures of his shocked compatriots and strutted abroad with one of the

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forbidden accessories. For he had learnt, during his travels in Persia, of the undeniable advantage of being able to go out in the rain without getting wet and would not have dreamt, after that, of dispensing with this blessed device.

Gradually other men ventured to follow his lead and in about 50 years' time the umbrella was at last recognised as an article suitable for masculine as well as feminine every-day use, just as necessary as collar or hat, until eventually, at Eton and Harrow, it was adopted as a compulsory item of the college outfit.

On his tombstone in the cemetery at Hampton Court in Middlesex, Jonas Hanway is described as "Friend and Father of the Poor." But this title was not conferred on him for his services to his fellowmen in the matter of the umbrella: it alludes to his munificence as founder of Magdalen Hospital.

On his memorial in Westminster Abbey the following words are inscribed:

"His name liveth and will ever live,  
Whilst active piety shall distinguish  
the Christian integrity and truth shall  
recommend the British merchant, and  
universal kindness shall characterize  
the citizen of the world."

The best ready reckoner in the world is Mr. Phillips, of Bognor, Sussex. The greatest linguist the nation has produced was a vicar, the Reverend John Mawer, who could speak and write 22 languages. There is a memorial tablet to him in the Church of Middleton Tyas, in the North Riding of Yorkshire, the scene of his life's work and where he is buried.

Three tailors from Tooley Street, London, S.E.1, not far from London Bridge, addressed a petition to the House of Commons, beginning with the words:

"We, the people of England. . . ."

A cigar merchant, of 34, The Haymarket, London, S.W.1, still announces on his sign and letter heading the fact that he is purveyor by royal appointment to the King of Hanover and the Duke of Cumberland.

Mr. Benson, a Member of Parliament from Lundy Isle, off the coast of Devonshire, had to go into hiding in consequence of the fact that he was a notorious smuggler and a "wanted" criminal being discovered by government officials.

But it is with great pride that the inhabitants of Stingle Street, near Bawdsey in Suffolk, point out that their ancestors were dangerous smugglers; as do the people of many more coast villages and towns.

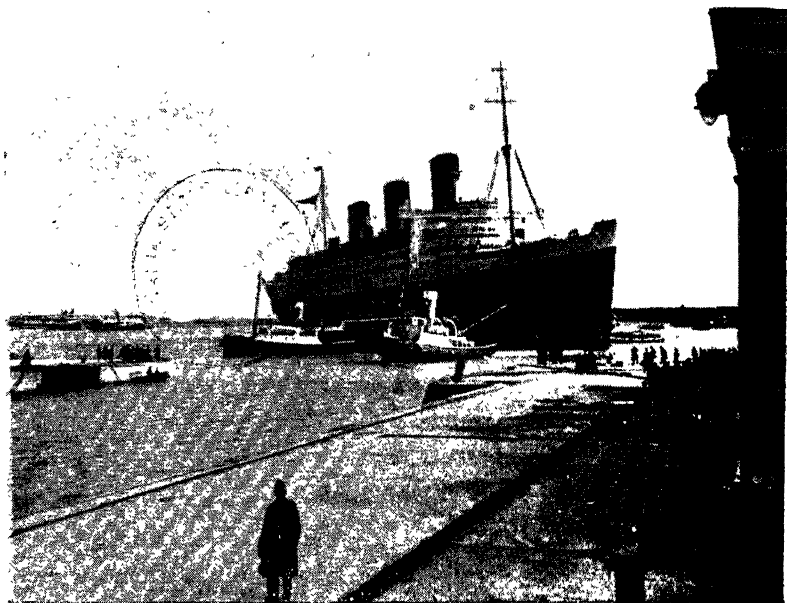
Tudor Castle, at Thornburgh, which belonged to Edward Duke



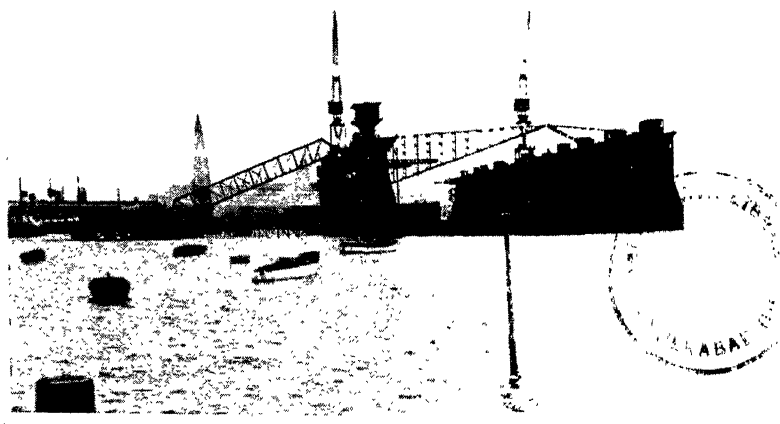
V. THE OLDEST INHABITED HOUSE IN BRITAIN,  
THE JEW'S HOUSE, LINCOLN



VI. THE NARROWEST STREET IN BRITAIN,  
PARLIAMENT STREET, EXETER



VII. THE WORLD'S BIGGEST SHIP ENTERING THE BIGGEST  
GRAVING DOCK. THE "QUEEN MARY" AT SOUTHAMPTON



VIII. THE WORLD'S BIGGEST FLOATING DOCK, SOUTHAMPTON



## REMARKABLE PEOPLE AND EPITAPHS

of Buckingham, was commenced about 400 years ago and is still not completed, as funds gave out.

Similarly the National Monument at Edinburgh, designed to commemorate the Battle of Waterloo, is still unfinished.

And we may perhaps mention here that the famous house in which the chronicler, Geoffrey of Monmouth, is supposed to have been born was actually built two hundred years after his death—he died in 1154.

The members of the families Mauleverers and Clamhams were interred, as it were, standing upright.

James Calvert was the winner of the only "First Prize" of £20,000 in a lottery which was ever awarded and, at a subsequent draw, won another £5,000. With his winnings he put up a large vinegar factory at the junction of City Road and Old Street, London, E.C.1, but thereafter his luck deserted him—or turned sour—for he soon lost it all and died a poor man.

Lawrence Earnshaw, an artisan-scholar of Mottram-in-Longsdeudale used to make his own clothes, paint pictures, repair violins, read Euclid; he also invented and made a mechanical clock which could speak as well as "tell" the time.

In fact, he could do anything you might choose to ask him. This versatile craftsman was, however, no sort of a business man and sold all his creations so cheaply that he died in abject poverty. His grave is in the churchyard of Hollingworth Chapel, at Mottram-in-Longsdeudale.

It was a Dutchman who built, at Wick, a house which is known at John Groat's House, an octagonal building with eight doors and an octagonal table.

His family numbered eight and he thought that by this means he would be able to prevent any squabbles arising from questions of precedence, or similar trivialities, which might cause offence, among people living at such close quarters.

There is in Britain a family living in the same house which has served as their ancestral home for 800 years. The name of the family, which must easily have the longest unbroken record of residence in one house, is Okeover, and their home is situated—as is of course only to be expected—at a place called Okeover in Staffordshire.

In Westminster Abbey is the grave of another time record breaker, namely that of Old Parr, who lived to the ripe old age of one 152.

In St. Helen's Church in the street known as Great St. Helen's, London, E.C.3, you may find a tomb which is said to contain the remains of a Sir Julius Cæsar.

Sabbeth-breakers and Sunday golfers should take heed of the following warning, copied from the church of Slanvair Discoed:

Whoever here on Sunday  
Should practise playing at ball  
It may be before Monday  
The devil will have you all!

A somewhat more picturesquely worded message of caution may be seen on a stone in a Dorset Church; it reminds us:

Man's Life.

Man is a glass :  
Life is a water that's weakly  
Walled about :  
Sin brings death :  
Death breakes the glass :  
So runnes the water out.  
Finis.

With this we come to the subject of curious inscriptions on tombstones.

In this sphere Britain undoubtedly outstrips all other countries in humour and originality.

A collection of exclusively cheerful epitaphs in Britain would make a pretty thick book, for it seems that nowhere does the humour of this nation shine forth more brilliantly, more impressively, more touchingly or more naively than here, in the peaccful dignity of her graveyards.

Here one may read the answers to riddles; here the devil is conjured up; the most exhaustive confessions of the sins of a lifetime are recorded; fate is railed at; even in some cases death itself is mocked in a manner which might well be imitated by others and which is worthy of imitation since it is a sign that among the people there is no real fear of Old Father Time with his scythe.

For those who wish to make a serious study of the subject of epitaphs, the following books may be recommended:

"*Chronicles of the Tombs*," by Thomas Joseph Pettigrew, published by George Bell & Son, London.

"*Epitaphs*," published at Maidstone, Kent.

"*Epitaphs and Epigrams*," published by Samuel Palmer, London.

"*Epitaphia*," by Ernest R. Suffling, published by L. Upcott Gill, London.

In the church at Clitheroe, in Lancashire, there is a horoscope on one of the tombstones.

A very frank judgment on Isaac Hawkins Browne is recorded on his grave:

"He was a good lawyer and a bad poet."

## REMARKABLE PEOPLE AND EPITAPHS

Even more truthful and sparingly worded is the inscription on one of the graves at Northchurch, in Hertfordshire, which reads :

“ Henry Axtil  
a rich Man  
starved himself,  
and was buried here  
April 12, 1625, 1 Cor. I.”

In the churchyard at Stretton, in Shropshire, one of the epitaphs tells us :

“ On a Thursday she was born  
On a Thursday made a bride,  
On a Thursday her leg was broke,  
And on a Thursday died.”

And perhaps even more curious than this fateful Thursday is the significance which a special day in the year held for another Briton. In the church at Kendal, Kent, the chief incidents of the life of Frances Sutherland are thus summed up :

“ She was born	1690
Married	24 June 1708
Buried	1725

Emblem of temporal good, the day that gave  
Her birth and marriage, saw in the grave,  
Wing'd with its nature love her soul took flight,  
To boundless regions of eternal light.”

On the 7th of August, 1905, a washerwoman named Catherine Alsopp, of Sheffield, was found hanged by her Sunday dress in her bedroom.

She had previously composed her own epitaph which she left written in pencil on a scrap of paper :

“ Here lies a poor woman who always was tired ;  
She lived in a house where help was not hired,  
Her last words on earth were : ‘ Dear friends, I am going,  
Where washing ain’t done, nor sweeping, nor sewing.  
But everything there is exact to my wishes,  
For where they don’t eat, there’s no washing of dishes  
I’ll be where loud anthems will always be ringing  
But having no voice, I’ll be clear of the singing.  
Don’t mourn for me now, don’t mourn for me never,  
I’m going to do nothing for ever and ever.’ ”

At Tuxford, in Nottinghamshire, we find the simple statement :

“ Here lies a rebel.”

## 1,000 CURIOSITIES OF BRITAIN

A certain Canon, in the reign of William III refused to take the oath of allegiance to the King: he was dismissed from his office.

Thus deprived of his livelihood, he starved, but still he refused to speak. For all that he was buried in Worcester Cathedral, with the shortest of epitaphs:

“ Miserrimus.”

But Wordsworth wrote a fine sonnet which is a fitting memorial to this man of inflexible will.

John Fox, in his famous “*Book of Martyrs*,” describes another case of similar steadfastness of purpose in his chapter on Edward Burton, where he tells us:

“ He was in ill-health and hearing the bells of Shrewsbury ringing in 1558, guessed it must be for the accession of Queen Elizabeth. He sent his son to inquire, and told him if it was so, to throw up his hat as soon as he returned in sight of the Longner windows.

“ On seeing this proof of his hopes, excitement and joy were too much for Burton and he suddenly died. The vicar of St. Chad’s refused the body burial in St. Chad’s Church as in his eyes that of a heretic, so it was interred in the garden.”

Eventually he found his last resting place in the garden of Longner House, near Shrewsbury.

In the year 1725, in Germany, in a forest on the estates of the King Hanover, a boy who had grown up in a state of complete wildness was found and taken captive.

Like the famous Casper Hauser, he had kept himself alive by feeding on the produce of the fields and the creatures of the forest. He could neither speak nor otherwise make himself understood. Hearing of this strange phenomenon, Queen Caroline had him brought to England as a “wonder animal,” and he was subsequently sent to live on a farm near Broadway, in Hertfordshire.

“ Peter, the wild boy,” died 60 years later and was buried at Northchurch, in Hertfordshire and his strange history was recounted on his tombstone.

Meg Merrilees, Sir Walter Scott’s famous heroine, died at Mumps Ha’, near Carvoran in Milcastle. She was buried at Over Denton, and her epitaph runs:

“ Here lieth the Body of Margarete Teasdale of Mumps  
Hall who died May the 5, 1777.  
Aged 98 years.

What I was once some may relate  
What I am now is each one’s fate  
What I shall be none can explain  
Till he that called call again.”

## REMARKABLE PEOPLE AND EPITAPHS

The oldest English rhymed inscription, however, is found at Holm-next-the-Sea, in Norfolk and dates from the year 1405 :

“Herry Notyngham and hys wyffe lyne here  
yat maden this chirche stepull and quere  
two vestments and belles they made also  
crist hem saue therefore ffro wo  
and to bringe her saules to blis at heuen  
sayth pater and aue with mylde steuen.”

It is pleasing to note how often inscriptions on graves take the form of expressions of gratitude for faithful services by family retainers.

At St. Giles' Church, Ickenham, Middlesex, you will find many such grateful acknowledgements. In St. Chad's Church, Lichfield, Staffordshire, is a monument erected over the place where Lucy Porter and Catherine Chambers are buried, which commemorates their loyal service to the parents of Dr. Johnson.

An expression of thanks in verse extols the virtues of “Mother Jack,” who was Edward VI's nurse. Her real name was Mrs. Sibel Penn: she died in the year 1552 and her grave is to be found in St. Mary's Church, at Hampton in Middlesex.

A monument in the church at Aston in Hertfordshire was dedicated to the memory of John Kent, who served Edward VI, Mary and Elizabeth. His wife and ten children were buried beside him.

In a churchyard at Twickenham there is a memorial to the woman who brought up Pope from infancy to manhood, inscribed :

“To the memory of Mary Beach,  
who died Nov. 5, 1825, aged 78.  
Alexander Pope,  
whom she nursed in his infancy,  
and whom she affectionately attended  
for twenty eight years,  
in gratitude for such a faithful old  
servant, erected this stone.”

At the Old Men's Hospital in Norwich we read the following inscription :

“In Memory of Mrs. Phebe Crewe, who died  
May 28, 1817, aged 77 years.  
Who, during forty years  
practiced as midwife  
in this city, brought into  
the world nine thousand  
seven hundred and  
thirty children.”

## 1,000 CURIOSITIES OF BRITAIN

Robert Sleath, who kept the turnpike gate at Worcester and demanded toll from the King on his visit to Bishop Hurd, thus earning the name of the man "who stopped the King," was given the following epitaph :

"On Wednesday last old Robert Sleath  
Passed through the turnpike-gate of Death.  
To him would Death no toll abate,  
Who stopp'd the King at Wor'ster gate."

In the Church of Stoke Albany in Northamptonshire there is a tombstone which tells you :

"Here lyeth ye Body of Frances Parker who gave to ye Pore of This Parish Ten Shillings a Yeare to be paid of Lamas Day every Yeare. For ever, upon this Gravestone—February ye 4th, 1683."

Over the entrance to one of the houses in the High Street of Rochester a similar endowment is recorded in the inscription :

"RICHARD WATTS, Esquire  
by his Will dated 22nd August, 1597  
founded this Charity  
for six poor Travellers  
who, not being Rogues or Protectors,  
May receive gratis for one Night,  
Lodging, Entertainment  
And Fourpence each."

At the Hospital of St. Cross, Winchester, anyone who cares to apply may have a tankard of beer and a piece of bread.

This is an ancient custom, instituted by Henry, Bishop of Blois in the year 1136, and it has survived to the present day.

In the church of Willey, near Linley, in Shropshire a stone was erected in memory of Margery Brider who, though she died at the ripe old age of 113, actually danced with the morris dancers the year before. But then, that was in the year 1643, when dances were dances and not such as the modern rumba !

In the churchyard of Wistantor, in Shropshire, is buried a woman who died at the age of 77. But she was too vain—or too shy—to allow this rather large figure to appear on her tombstone ; so she carefully disguised her true age from the cursory reader in the following couplet :

"Twice six, twice seven,  
Twice twenty and eleven."

The church of St. Michael at Bishop Middleham, in Durham, has a monument to :

"Alice, widow of Thomas Bedford, mother, grandmother and great grandmother of 74 children."

under which someone has added in pencil :

"Besides embryos."

## REMARKABLE PEOPLE AND EPITAPHS

At Conway, Carnarvonshire, one of the tombs in the church is surmounted by the following inscription :

“ Nicholas Hockes, of Conway, Gent. who was the  
forty first child of his father, William Hockes,  
Esq., by Alice, his wife, who was himself the  
father of twenty seven childrens, he died  
20th March, 1627.”

In the cathedral in which the Rev. Dr. Honeywood, Dean of Lincoln, worked, one may read :

“ Here lyeth the body of  
MICHAEL HONEYWOOD, D.D.  
Who was grandchild, and one of the  
Three hundred and sixty-seven persons  
That Mary the wife of Robert Honeywood, Esq.  
Did see before she died  
Lawfully descended from her,  
Sixteen of her own body, 114 grand children  
288 of the third generation, and 9 of the fourth.  
Mrs. HONEYWOOD  
Died in the year 1605  
And in the 78th year of her age.”

At Bickenwill, in Warwickshire, the printer's—or more correctly, the stonemason's, evil genius seems to have been up to mischief when dealing with Mrs. Annie Smith : for this is what we see :

“ Here Lyeth the Body of Mrs. ANNIE SMITH  
WHO dePARTED THIS Life OCTO the 28, in the year 1702  
Shee Lived a maid and died aged 708.”

Seven hundred and eight years, indeed! Unquestionably an unchallenged world record.

There is another in the churchyard at Leek, Staffs. :

James Robinson  
Interred Feb., 1788  
Aged 438

The secret of longevity is disclosed on the tombstone of Mrs. Rebecca Freeland, who died in 1741 and was buried in the church of St. Lawrence, at Edwalton in Nottinghamshire :

“ She drank good the good Punch and Wine,  
And liv'd to th' Age of ninety nine.”

We cannot help admiring the enterprise and perseverance of

## 1,000 CURIOSITIES OF BRITAIN

Mr. Nicholas Toke, whose grave at Great Chart, in Kent, tells us that—

“He married five wives whom he survived. At the age of 93 he walked to London to seek a sixth, but died before he found her . . .”

But his achievements are rivalled and surpassed by what is recorded on two neighbouring tombs in St. Augustine's Church at Bridbrook, in Essex. These tell us of

“Martha Blewitt  
ye wife of nine husbands successively,  
buried 8 of ym, but last of all,  
ye woman dyed allsoe, was buryd  
May 7, 1681.”

and :

“Robert Hogand,  
the husband of seven wives,  
the last of whom he married January 1st, 1739.”

In the church at Wishford, in Wiltshire, is a statue of Sir Thomas Bonham, in pilgrim's garb, erected in memory of him, his wife and his children, of whom seven were born at the same time. These “septuplets” of Sir Thomas put America's “Quins” right in the shade!

In the churchyard at Fersfield, near Diss, Norfolk, we come upon the following little idyll :

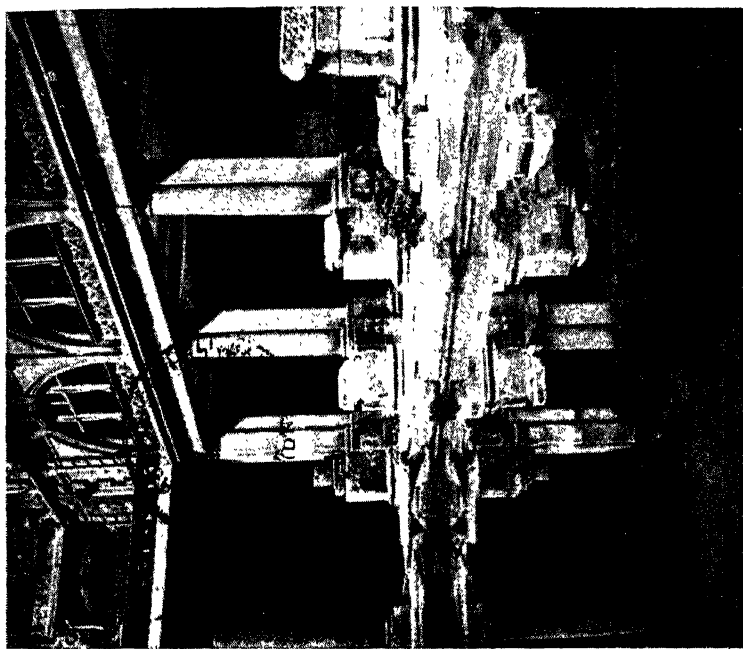
“Here lies Buried  
HENRY BLOMEFIELD, Gent.  
Who Died Nov. the 3rd  
1670  
ANN his first Wife  
Lies at the Right Hand  
And DIANA his Second  
At his Left  
The  
Father  
The Word and  
The Holy Ghost  
And these Three  
Are One. 1 John 5, 7,  
Three in One. Luke 3, 21, 22  
One in Three. Gen. 1, 2, Jo. 2, 3,  
Is Unity, in Trinity. John 15, 26.”

And one cannot help smiling at a little rhymed dialogue between husband and wife recorded in Hertford cemetery :





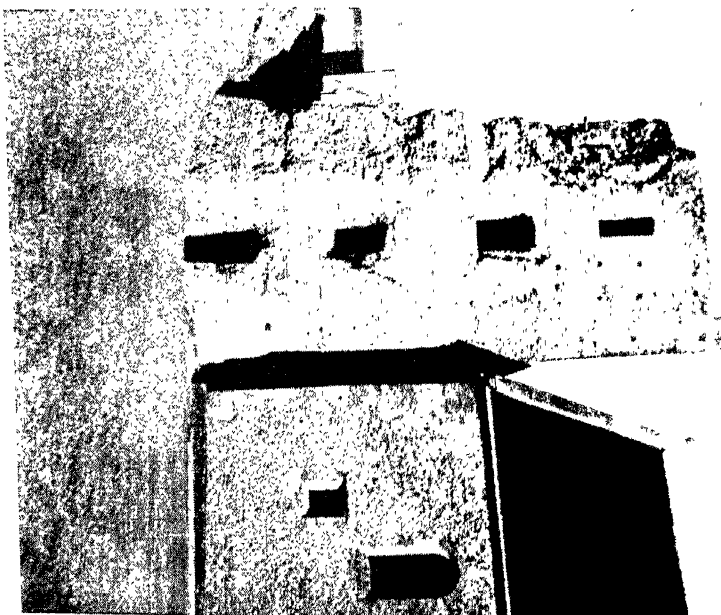
IX. BRITAIN'S PRETTIEST VILLAGE, CLOVELLEY



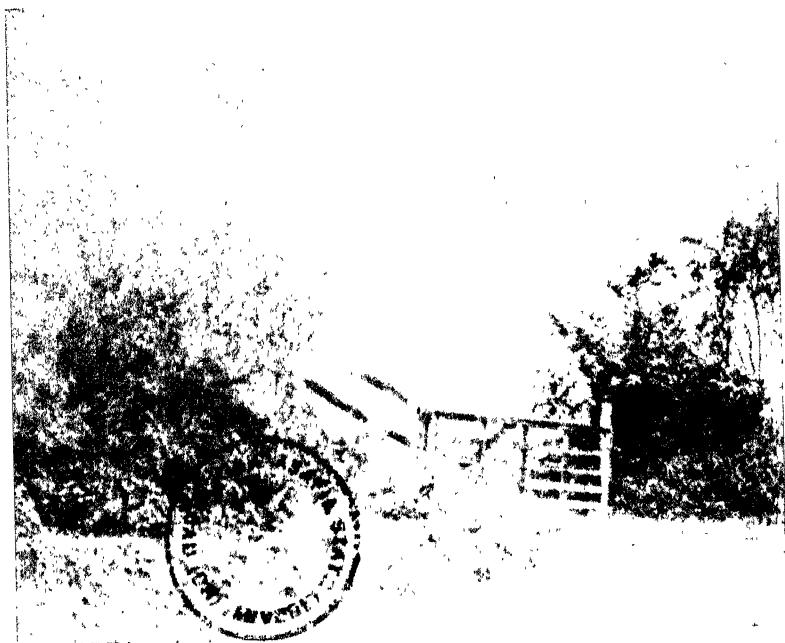
X. ROMAN BATH, BATH



XI. KIT'S COTTY HOUSE, KENT



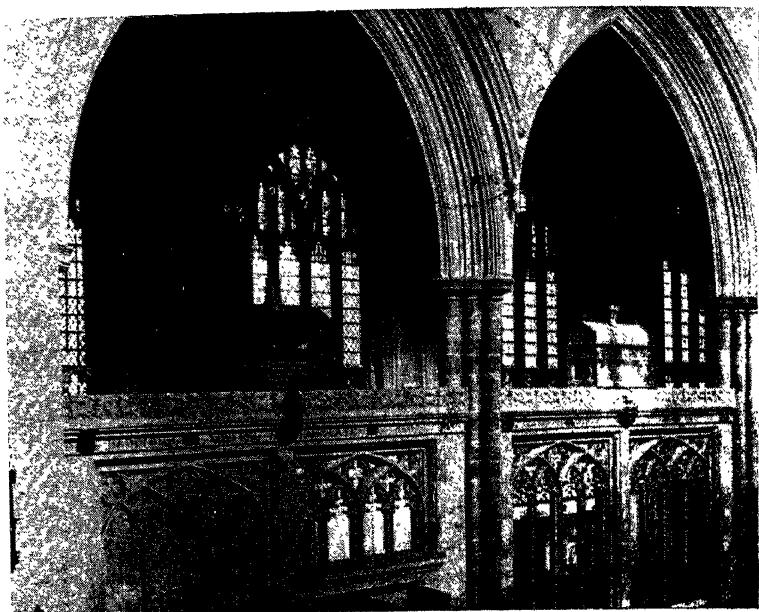
XII. THE OLDEST BUILDING IN BRITAIN, PHAROS  
TOWER, DOVER, BUILT IN 46 A.D.



XIII. THE LONG MAN, WILMINGTON



XIV. SAXON CORONATION STONE AT KINGSTON-ON-THAMES



XV. BONES OF KINGS CANUTE AND EGBERT IN CHESTS AT  
WINCHESTER CATHEDRAL



XVI. "BRIDGE OF SIGHS," CAMBRIDGE

## REMARKABLE PEOPLE AND EPITAPHS

*Woman:* Grieve not for me my husband dear,  
I am not dead, but sleeping here,  
With patience wait, prepare to die  
And, in a short time, you'll come to I.

*Man:* I am not grieved, my dearest life,  
Sleep on, I have got another wife,  
Therefore I cannot come to thee  
For I must go and live with she!

It was a rash man who put the unhappy inscription on the tombstone of Gabriel Wood, at Coryton, in Devonshire. As, however, it refers to some 300 years ago we may perhaps venture to quote it without fear of a libel action. In fact, one rather sympathises with the poor man—

“Who had sons three, but not one good!”

The luck of the British Navy is proverbial, but among the elect, the son of Admiral Vernon appears to have been blessed with unusual powers, for his epitaph—obviously written before his death—announces:

“Here lies the body of Thomas Vernon  
The only surviving son of Admiral Vernon.”

Which are we to believe? That his corpse was interred beneath the stone, or that he still survives?

Or is this an authentic case of survival after death?

A similar query is raised by another funerary scribe in Dunfermline, Scotland:

“Here lies the corpse of Andrew Robertson  
Present Deacon-Convener of Weavers in this burgh.  
Who died 13th July, 1745.”

Is he “present,” or is he dead?

In the churchyard at Kirk Keel there are two tombstones on which the inscriptions seem to have been composed without much intelligence. One of them tells us:

“Here lie the remains of Thomas Nichols who died in Philadelphia, March, 1753. Had he lived, he would have been buried here.”

“Had he lived!”

Had he lived one can imagine with what ferocity he would have fought against being buried alive!

The other inscription:

“Under this sod lies John Round  
Who was lost in the sea and never was found.”

## 1,000 CURIOSITIES OF BRITAIN

gives one a morbid desire to have the grave opened to find out just what it was that was interred under that sod.

In the Llanmychnech churchyard, in Montgomeryshire, we come across the following piece of other-worldly wisdom :

“ Here lies John. Thomas  
And his three children dear,  
Two buried at Oswestry,  
And one here.”

That is surely a little too much—so glaring a contradiction in four short lines on one stone!

Dan Boswell, the King of Gypsies, was borne to his last rest in the churchyard at Selston, in Nottinghamshire. After a truly regal funeral, attended not only by all the gypsies in England, but also by representatives of those in most of the European countries, dressed in ceremonial costume, his inconsolable fellow tribesmen found only the following words in which to enshrine his memory :

“ I’ve lodged in many town,  
I’ve travelled many a year,  
But death at length has brought me down  
To my last lodging here.”

Another king, Inverto Boswell, has a wall tablet on Calne Church, Wilts.

In St. Philip’s churchyard, at Birmingham, there is a stone which tells of a strange woman :

“ In memory of  
MANETTA STOCKER  
who quitted this life the fourth day of May  
1819, at the age of thirty-nine years.  
The smallest woman in this kingdom  
and one of the most accomplished.  
She was not more than thirty-three inches high.  
She was a native of Austria.”

Another remarkable woman lies buried in the Old Church, Brighton, where we read :

“ In memory of  
PHOEBE HESSEL  
Who was born at Stepney in the year 1713.  
She served for many years  
as a Private Soldier, in the 5th Regiment of Foot,  
in different parts of Europe,

## REMARKABLE PEOPLE AND EPITAPHS

and in the year 1745, fought under the command  
of the Duke of Cumberland,  
at the battle of Fontenoy,  
where she received a bayonet wound  
In her arm.

Her long life, which commenced in the  
reign of Queen Anne, extended to George IV,  
by whose munificence she received  
comfort and support in her latter years.  
She died at Brighton where she had long resided,  
December 12th, 1812. Aged 108 years."

The epitaph of another soldier of the same period—this time a  
genuine man—must also be numbered among the curiosities of  
this country. It is to be found in the precincts of Winchester  
Cathedral, and runs thus :

“ In memory of  
Thomas Thatcher  
a Grenadier of the Ninth Regiment  
of Hants Militia, who died of a  
Violent Fever, contracted by drinking  
small Beer, when Hot, the 12th of May  
1769, aged 26 years.  
In Grateful Remembrance of  
whose universal  
Goodwill Towards His Comrades  
This Stone  
Is placed here at Their Expense  
as a small  
Testimony of Their Regard and Concern,  
Here sleeps in peace a Hampshire Grenadier  
Who caught his death by drinking cold small beer  
Soldiers, be wise from his untimely fall,  
And when ye're hot drink strong or none at all.

Sickness is the theme of another epitaph, this time at Dulverton,  
in Somerset :

“ Neglected by his doctor,  
Ill treated by his nurse,  
His brother robbed the widow,  
Which made it all the worse.”

Misfortune seems to have pursued this poor man to the grave  
and beyond!

And how great must have been the fortitude of the poor lady of

## 1,000 CURIOSITIES OF BRITAIN

whose last illness we learn from a tombstone in Bunhill Fields, London :

“ Here lies  
Dame Mary Page  
Relict of Sir Gregory Page, Bart.  
She departed this Life  
March 4th, 1728,  
In the 56th year of her age.  
In 67 months she was tapped 66 times. Had taken away  
240 gallons of water, without ever repining at her case,  
or ever fearing the operation.”

Heart-rending, too, is the obituary on the tomb of Elizabeth Picket at Stoke Newington, London.

“ This tomb was erected by WILLIAM PICKET, of the City of London, Goldsmith, on the melancholy death of his Daughter ELIZABETH

A testimony of respect  
From greatly afflicted parents.  
In memory of Elizabeth Picket, Spinster,  
Who died Dec. 11, 1781.  
Aged 23 years.

This much lamented  
Young person expired in consequence  
of her clothes taking fire  
The preceding evening.  
Reader if ever you should witness such an affecting  
scene, recollect that the only method to extinguish the  
flame is to stifle it by an immediate covering.  
So unaffected, so composed a mind  
So firm yet soft, so stout yet, so refin'd ;  
Heart's as pure gold, by flaming tortures try'd  
The angel bore them, but the mortal dy'd.  
Not a sparrow falls  
On the ground without  
Our heavenly Father.”

The life-story of Margery Scott, with her reflections on contemporary events, is carved on her tomb in the churchyard at Dunkeld :

“ Stop reader, here, until my life you've read,  
The living may gain knowledge from the dead :  
Five times five years I've lived a virgin's life ;  
Ten times five years I was a married wife ;  
Ten times five years a widow grave and chaste ;  
Now wearied of this mortal life I rest.



## REMARKABLE PEOPLE AND EPITAPHS

I from my cradle to my grave have seen  
Eight mighty Kings of Scotland and a queen ;  
Four times five years the Commonwealth I saw,  
Ten times the subjects rose against the law,  
Twice did I see old prelacy put down,  
And twice the cloak did sink beneath the gown.  
And end of Stuart's race I saw—nay more,  
I saw my country sold for English ore ;  
Such desolation in my time has been,  
That I've an end of all perfection seen."

Master John Hall, who was buried in the Denmark cemetery in Ireland, appears to have been very dissatisfied with the fate meted out to him in this world, and one can only hope that in the world beyond he found some compensation. His epitaph announces :

"Here lie the remains of John Hall, grocer  
The world is not worth a fig, and I have  
good reason for saying so."

And the story which is told of John Racket in the churchyard at Woodton, in Norfolk describes an equally unedifying lot :

"Here lies John Racket  
In his wooden jacket,  
He kept neither horses nor mules,  
He lived like a hog,  
He died like a dog.  
And left all his money to fools."

Somewhat less aggressive is the epitaph Mr. William Pepper chose to mark his last resting place in St. John's cemetery at Stamford in 1783 :

"Tho' hot my name, yet mild my nature,  
I love good will to every creature ;  
I brew'd good ale and sold it too,  
And unto each I gave his due ! "

St. Olaves', Southwark, houses the mortal remains of a suicide, on whose grave they carved :

"Hallowed be the Saboath,  
And Farewell all worldly pelfe,  
The weeke begins on Tuesday.  
For Munday hath hang'd himselfe."

The victim of undiscovered murderers lies buried in St. Michael's Church, Workington, in Cumberland. His friends had the following lines inscribed over his grave :

## 1,000 CURIOSITIES OF BRITAIN

"Murdered near this town June 15, 1808.  
His murderers were never discovered.  
You villains! if this stone you see,  
Remember that you murdered me!  
You bruised my head and pierced my heart  
Also my bowels did suffer part."

But now let us turn to more "cheerful" obituaries.

In a church at Streatham, Major General Hamilton, as long ago as 1746, inscribed an unqualified eulogy over his wife's tomb:

"Elizabeth,  
Wife of Major General Hamilton,  
who was married 47 years,  
and never did ONE thing to disoblige  
her husband."

In the churchyard at Bideford, in Devonshire, the virtues of another woman are extolled—but not without a dig at the occupant of the next grave.

"Here lies the Body of Mary Sexton  
Who pleased many a man, but ne'er vex't one:  
Not like the woman who lies under the next stone!"

The following epitaph gives one a clear insight into the domestic bliss of one who now sleeps in the Canterbury burial ground.

"Of children in all she bore twenty-four;  
Thank the Lord will be no more!"

And then one wonders whether the words carved on one of the graves at Ulverton, in Lancashire, were meant as a pious prayer for the lady's admission to Heaven.

"Here lies my wife,  
Here lies she,  
Hallelujah!  
Hallelujee!"

Another strange inscription from a man to his betrothed is found in the West Churchyard at Aranent in East Lothian, Scotland:

"Trumpets shall sound  
And archangels cry,  
Come forth, Isabell Mitchell,  
And meet William Matheson in the sky."

William Bond, who was responsible for the inscription on the grave of his brother and the latter's wife in the churchyard of

## REMARKABLE PEOPLE AND EPITAPHS

Horsley Down, Cumberland, seems to have been an extraordinary voluble and impassioned scandalmonger, since he wrote of the couple as follows :

“ Here lie the bodies

of THOMAS BOND, and MARY his wife  
She was temperate, chaste, and charitable ;

BUT

She was proud, peevish, and passionate.  
She was an affectionate wife, and a tender mother :

BUT

Her husband and child, whom she loved,  
Seldom saw her countenance without a disgusting frown,  
Whilst she received visitors, whom she despised with an endearing smile.

Her behaviour was discreet towards strangers,

BUT

Independent in her family.  
Abroad, her conduct was influenced by good breeding ;

BUT

At home, by ill temper.  
She was a professed enemy to flattery,  
And was seldom known to praise or commend ;

BUT

The talents in which she principally excelled,  
Were difference of opinion, and discovering flaws and imperfections.

She was an admirable economist, and without prodigality,  
Dispensed plenty to every person in her family,

BUT

Would sacrifice their eyes to a farthing candle  
She sometimes made her husband happy with her good qualities ;

BUT

Much more frequently miserable—with her many failings :  
In so much that in thirty years cohabitation he often lamented  
That maugre all her virtues,  
He had not, in the whole, enjoyed two years of matrimonial comfort.

AT LENGTH

Finding that she had lost the affections of her husband,  
As well as the regard of her neighbours,  
Family disputes having been divulged by servants,  
She died of vexation, July 20, 1768,  
aged 48 years.  
Her worn out husband survived her four months and two days,

## 1,000 CURIOSITIES OF BRITAIN

And departed this life, Nov. 28, 1768,  
In the 54<sup>th</sup> year of his age.  
WILLIAM BOND, brother to the deceased, erected this stone,  
As a weekly monitor, to the surviving wives of this parish,  
That they may avoid the infamy."

One might search the whole world over and still, I believe, find no epitaph to equal that.

But to conclude this chapter I would quote one which, in itself and in the story behind it, easily outstrips in strangeness all that has gone before.

In the churchyard at Martham, in Norfolk, we read—and probably re-read many times, for we can hardly believe our eyes :

"Here Lyeth the Body of Christ Burraway, who departed the Life Ye 18 day of October, Anno Domini 1730. Aged 59 years."

So far so good. But now, curiosity-sated Reader, prepare yourself for a shock as we read on :

"And there Lyes  
ALICE who by his Life  
Was my Sister, my mistres,  
My mother and my wife.  
Dyed Feb. ye 12, 1729.  
Aged 76 years."

One may well stand speechless before it. The story of this obscure Oedipus tragedy is as follows. In the year 1670 a farmer at Martham, named Christ Burraway, seduced his 27 year-old daughter, Alice.

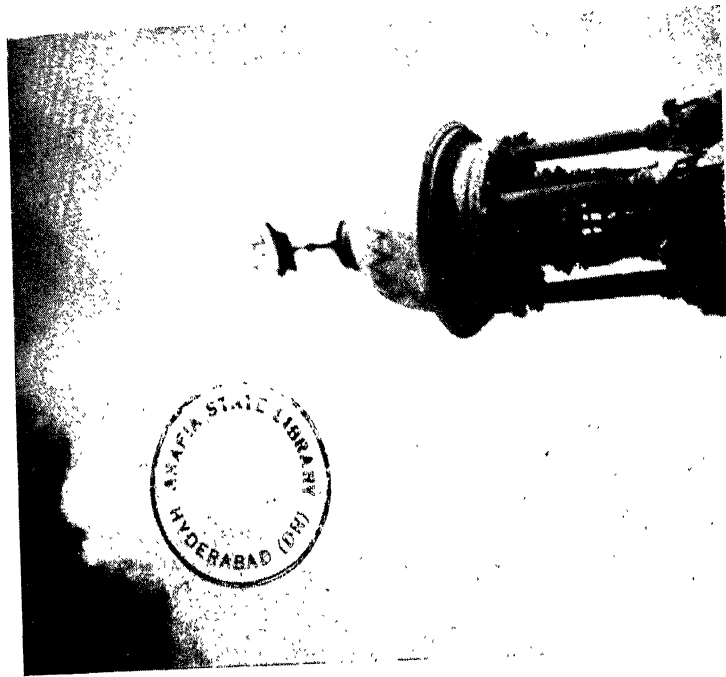
She bore him a son, whom she sent away secretly to a foundling home far from the place where she lived. Here the son of Christ grew up and, when he reached the age of 20, was apprenticed to a farmer.

When he had completed his training in this, his father's calling, he wandered through the countryside in search of work until, by chance, he came to Martham and, as it happened, went to Alice Burraway to apply for a job, quite unaware that he was speaking to his mother.

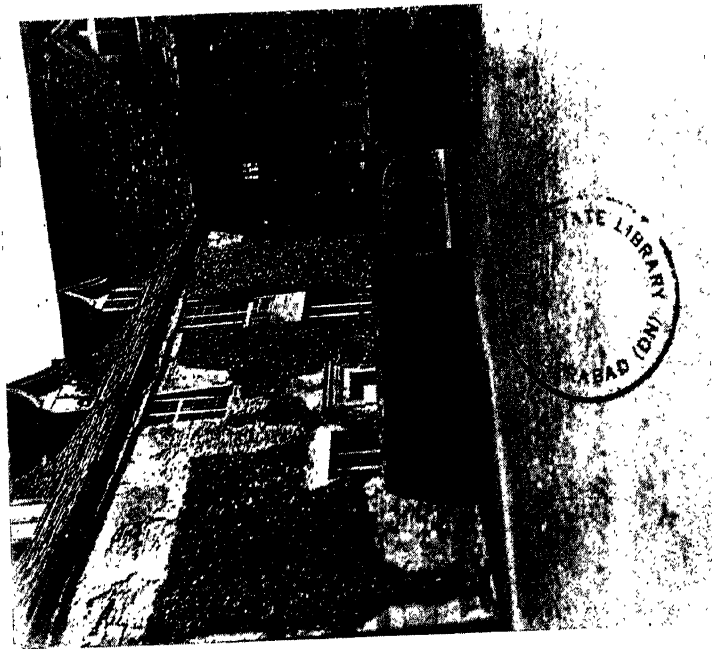
By this time his—and, of course, her—father was dead and Alice Burraway decided to take on the young man, she too being completely unaware that he was her son.

She grew fond of him and became his mistress and, later on, they were married and lived for 20 years as man and wife.

It was not until she was 76 years old that Alice Burraway chanced to discover that her husband had two moles on his shoulder, just like her father and herself. And then it crossed her mind that she had noticed this self-same birth-mark on her son. So



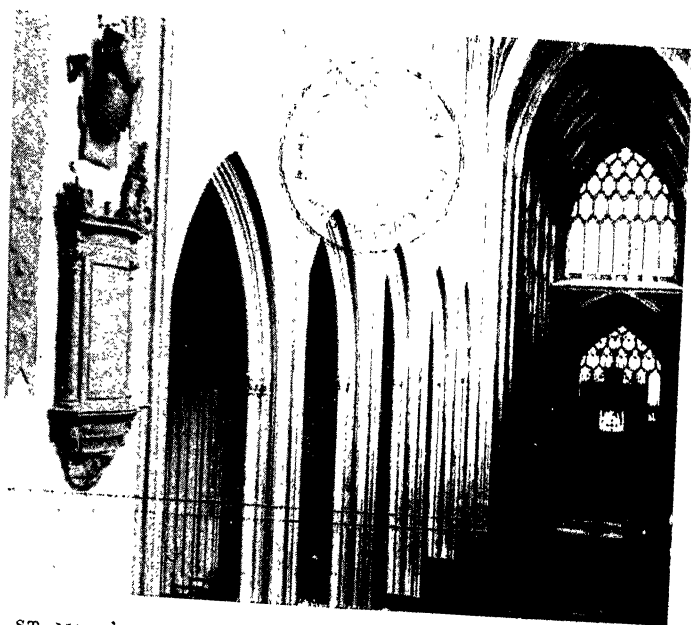
XVIII. THE "MAYFLOWER" VANE, PILGRIM FATHERS' MEMORIAL, SOUTHAMPTON



XVII. SULGRAVE MANOR, HOME OF THE WASHINGTONS



XIX. TIMBERS OF "THE MAYFLOWER"



XX. ST. MARY'S REDCLIFFE CHURCH, BRISTOL, SHOWING ARMOUR  
OF ADMIRAL PENN. FATHER OF WILLIAM PENN

## REMARKABLE PEOPLE AND EPITAPHS

she pressed him to tell her about his childhood, for he had hitherto maintained strict silence as to his past history, as he hardly cared to have it known that he was an illegitimate foundling.

And so he told her of his youth and upbringing at the foundling home.

Full of misgivings and anxious only to set her mind at rest, the old lady set out for the orphanage where she made enquiries and, on learning the date on which the man who was now her husband had been admitted there, realised that she had married her own son.

Horror-stricken, she fainted and shortly died.

When she failed to return, the man went to fetch her home, but found her dead. Then he too learnt the whole of the ghastly tragedy in which the evil spirits of chance and fate had involved him.

He too fell ill and within four months followed his mother, sister, mistress and wife to the grave.

## CHAPTER IV

### CURIOSITIES OF ANCIENT BRITAIN

IN the limestone cliffs of Paviland, on the Gower Peninsula in Glamorgan, South Wales, 11 miles south-west of Swansea, a skeleton was discovered in the year 1823, in a cavern known as "Goat's Hole." It was a human skeleton, evidently of a tall man, and near it were the skull and tusks of a hairy mammoth and implements which belong to the Aurignacian era. Dr. Buckland, the famous archaeologist, writes of the bones of this "Red Man"—who, incidentally, was first erroneously regarded as a "Red Lady of Paviland":

"They were all of them stained superficially with a dark brick-red colour, and enveloped by a coating of a kind of niddle composed of red micaceous oxide of iron" (hence 'Red' man) "which stained the earth, and in some parts extended itself to the distance of about half an inch around the surface of the bones. The body must have been entirely surrounded or covered over at the time of its interment with this red substance."

The next important survival, if one may so call it, of "ancient man" in Britain was discovered at Galley Hill, just under three miles west of Gravesend, in Kent. It is described by Donald A. Mackenzie, in his book, "*Ancient Man in Britain*," published by Blackie and Son. He says:

"His bones, when found, were much decayed and denuded, and the skull contorted. The somewhat worn 'wisdom tooth' indicates that he was a 'fully-grown' adult, though probably not an aged individual."

It is not so easy to place this man on the prehistoric "map," but the experts, weighing up the evidence, have come to the conclusion that he was a "pioneer of the medium-sized hunters who entered Europe from the east, during the Aurignacian stage of culture."

It is not so very long since one of the host of amateur archaeologists who are always searching for the wonders of forgotten ages stumbled upon a highly interesting find. He was a dentist, Alvan T. Marston, of Clapham and, digging in a gravel pit some eight yards deep at Swanscombe, in Kent, he found an occipital bone—which was taken to be the skull—or part of it—of one of London's earliest "citizens." Other experts hailed it as the missing part of the cranium of the Piltdown Man. However, without narrowing it



## CURIOSITIES OF ANCIENT BRITAIN

down to an individual, authoritative archaeological opinion ascribed to it an age of 20,000 years—with a minority—and somewhat fantastic—estimate at 100,000 years. And the net result was a veritable rush to the gravel pits of Swanscombe and the Thames valley in search of other traces of these prehistoric men.

The most notable antiquity of Great Britain is Stonehenge, about eight miles from Salisbury. It is the largest relic of the primitive stone works in Britain, a group of high stones that stand in bold relief against the sky. It is now a broken circle of flat monoliths, six feet in width, three and a half feet thick, rising about 12½ feet above the ground. Once they supported a continuous row of 30 covering stones, of which only six remain in place.

"A little south-west of the centre is a huge flat altar, measuring three and a half by 17 feet, and around it, forming a horse-shoe figure, were five vast trilithons, each with two upright stones capped by a horizontal third stone. All the five were similar in form, but different in size, the largest of them, now prostrate, being on the outside about 17 feet wide and 27 feet long. About half of these stones are standing, and like the others mentioned, are a hard tertiary sandstone, which is found upon the chalk in the neighbourhood, and is of a pale buff or whitish colour, but has grown extremely gray on the exposed surfaces. A sort of rampart, also circular, about 300 feet across, surrounded the mysterious structure, while scattered thickly for miles around, are tumuli, nearly every one of which contained the cinerary urns, the arms and other relics of the dead."—*The Guide*.

Vestiges of primitive human habitations in Britain are to be seen, among other places, at the Ring of Stenness, in Orkney, four miles north-east of Stromness. Here one finds two groups of ancient stone circles, similar to those at Stonehenge. The smallest of these circles has 15 stones each about 12 feet high, and a diameter of some 100 feet. Nearby is the "Stone of Odin," eight feet in height, about which one reads in Scott's novel, "*The Pirate*."

Another stone circle dating from the dim, distant past, has been preserved in the village of Callernish in the parish of Uig on the northern shore of Lake Roag on Lewis Island, in the Hebrides. It was not rediscovered until 1858. These stones are monoliths of undressed gneiss, from four and a half to 12 feet high. They form a circle 43 feet in diameter, from which an avenue of stones runs due north, and single lines run due south, east and west, thus forming a cross in which a circle has been superimposed. The charred remains of men and animals were found in the neighbourhood, suggesting that this was an ancient burial ground. Half a mile eastwards is another circle, and many other relics of this and a similar nature have been found on Lewis Island.

In East Cumberland, two and a half miles south-east of Kirkos-

wald, Long Még and her Daughters constitute another stone circle of 68 unhewn stones—a large family! These stones, which are oval in form, are of granite, limestone and greenstone. Long Még herself, the largest of these stones, is 12 feet high, 14 feet in circumference and weighs 17 tons. Her daughters stand a little way off—some 25 yards to the south-west—and are only 10 feet high, and measure between 10 and 15 feet in girth. Wordsworth wrote a poem in which he celebrated the beauty of these “ladies.”

“The King’s Stones” also form a circle, to be found at Little Rollrich in north-west Oxfordshire, three miles north-west of Chipping Norton. These prehistoric remains are eight and a half feet high and five and a quarter feet broad, and though in our own day only a fraction of the total number are left standing, originally they numbered 72. No doubt collectors can account for this decline in numbers.

At a distance of 400 yards from these King’s Stones, one comes upon the remains of a cromlech, or ancient altar, known as “The Whispering Knights.”

In a field near the Church of Stanton Trew, seven miles south of Bristol in Somerset, there are several circles of massive stones, which are alleged to be mementoes of King Arthur.

The village of Avebury, North Wiltshire, six miles west of Marlborough and twenty miles from Stonehenge, is famous as the site of the remains of a Druidical temple, one of the most remarkable monuments in Britain. It seems that originally the temple precincts were enclosed by a deep ditch, with a corresponding embankment, enclosing an area measuring about 1,400 feet across, containing one large outside ring of a hundred stones. Inside this outer ring are two double circles, one with three stones in the centre, the other with only one. These are supposed to have been temples, and the entrances to them were approached each by a long, winding avenue of stones—believed by some to indicate that this was a sanctuary connected with the worship of the serpent. The stones used to make this wonderful group of sanctuaries vary from five to 20 feet in height—many of them being as massive as those of Stonehenge. Not far away is a fine cromlech, and another stone circle.

Apart from Avebury, there are in Britain other rediscovered places of worship.

Near Yougholgreave, in north-west Derbyshire, there is a prehistoric circle of 30 stones, 150 feet in diameter. In the same district, at the village of Eyam, five miles north of Bakewell, on the south side of the Church of St. Helen, is a Runic cross, showing Scandinavian knotwork of the ninth century. Arthur’s Round Table, near Eamont Bridge, is a circle on raised ground, with a ditch around it, and not far from this, on the other side of the road, is a

## CURIOSITIES OF ANCIENT BRITAIN

large unhewn stone of indeterminate age, surrounded by a rough stone wall 16 feet high. Vertical stones which have been identified as marking burial chambers from the Stone Age are to be seen at : Plas Newydd, Anglesey, North Wales ; Pentre Evan, Pembrokeshire, South Wales ; Stoney Littleton, five miles from Bath, in Somerset ; Uley, 15 miles south of Gloucester, and Maeshore, in the Orkney Islands, eight and a half miles north-west of Kirkwall.

At Maeshore there is a conical tumulus 30 feet high, 92 feet in diameter and 300 feet in circumference, surrounded, at a distance of 80 feet, by a 40-foot moat, six feet deep. It was not till 1861 that the passage to the central chamber was re-discovered. This chamber is in the form of a cube of 15 feet, and on the walls are dragons and Runic inscriptions. It seems that Norsemen plundered it.

Megaliths are found at many other places in England, e.g., "Kit's Cotty House," at Aylesford, in Kent, three miles north-west of Maidstone. Another is the Trethery Stone, a granite cromlech in south-east Cornwall, a mile north of Cleer. It consists of three upright stones and a large superimposed slab, set slantwise. Thomas Wright, in his book on "The Celt, the Roman and the Saxon," explains the word cromlech as having "a meaning not much different from that of the name *dolmen* given to them in France, which signifies a stone table. Some of our Celtic antiquaries, not satisfied with the name of 'cromlech,' had named them Kistvaens, or, as they interpret it, 'stone chests.' Indeed, their appearance in an uncovered state readily suggests the idea of a table, and the peasantry in France often call them 'fairies' tables' and 'devil's tables.' These chambers are usually closed in only on three sides, and consist of four stones, three of which raised on their ends, form the sides of a square, while the fourth serves as the covering. Such is the very remarkable cromlech on the hill between Maidstone and Rochester, in Kent, known by the name of Kit's Cotty House."

In the adjoining view of the cromlech of Chun-Quoit, in the parish of Morvan, in the western part of Cornwall, only the lower corner of the stone forming the transverse side is seen.

Sepulchral mounds dating from the Bronze Age have been opened up at Woodyates, near Stonehenge, on Salisbury Plain, by the road from Salisbury to Blandford.

There are some places in Britain where well-preserved parts of former British camps have been unearthed.

The first and most significant of these is Maidan Castle, two miles south-west of Dorchester, in Dorset. It was once the chief fortress of the Duvotriges and covers an area of 115 acres, being 3,000 feet long from east to west, and 1,500 feet wide.

Then comes Cadbury Castle, six miles south-west of Wincanton,

in East Somerset. There one finds the remains of extensive earthworks of an early British period, and excavations have yielded a stone axe, an early British coin, fragments of pottery, and a bronze bracelet. This place has been identified with the Camelot of the Arthurian legends.

Another ancient British camp was situated at Worlbury Hill, two miles east of Stockbridge, in north-west Hampshire. This is surrounded by a ditch and rampart, and covers an area of 20 acres.

The next oldest British camp which belongs to this series is that at Cissbury Hill, two and a half miles north of Worthing in Sussex. This is the largest earthwork in England, it is oval in shape and covers 60 acres: it is surrounded by a high rampart and a fosse which varies from eight to 12 feet in depth. Many flints from the Neolithic Age came from this neighbourhood.

Barbury Hill on Marlborough Downs, five miles south of Swindon, in Wiltshire, is a well-preserved British camp, surrounded by a double ditch and rampart, and measuring 2,000 feet across.

Near the huge earthwork at Cissbury on the Downs, flint workings dating from the Stone Age have been discovered. The men from that far-past age sunk a shaft to a depth of over 12 yards into the chalk formation here in order to hack out the flints that they required for tools and for making fires. Flint workings have been opened up again also at Grimes Graves, near Brandon, in Suffolk. Vitriified forts may be seen in the following places: The Hill of Noa, seven miles from Huntly, Aberdeenshire, Scotland; Knockfarril, one and threequarter miles north-east of Strathpeffer, Ross-shire, Scotland—a conical hill 579 feet high; Craigphadrick Hill, five miles west of Inverness, Scotland—a fort 240 feet long and 90 feet wide; and Bum Mar Uisneaghen, on the sea-loch Etive, which opens off the Firth of Lorne, Argyllshire, Scotland.

In Orkney and Shetland, 145 round buildings have been found, the so-called "brochs" of the Picts. Caithness has 150 of these and Sutherland 67, making in all 362 relics of the handiwork of the Picts—the people who migrated from the French province of Poitou to the Orkney islands in order to secure for themselves the mastery of the eastern and western Scottish sea-routes.

On Lewis Island, in the Hebrides, there are ancient towers dating from the time of the Pictish domination. One of them may be seen at Carloway, 13 miles west of Stornway. Another known as "The Standing Stones" is to be found at Callernish. Another Pictish tower stands at Mousa Bourgh, on the east coast of Mainland, 11 miles south of Lerwick, in the Shetland Islands. This is a well-preserved circular tower, 42 feet high, narrowing half way up, but widening again towards the top: there is an inner and an outer wall.

The tower which dominates the village of Glenelg on Glenelg

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Bay, on the west coast of Inverness-shire, 14 miles south-west of Strome Ferry, is likewise a Pictish tower. At the hunting lodge of the former Kings of Scotland, at Durnadilla, 11 miles south-west of Tongue, Sutherlandshire, in Scotland, there is another tower of this kind, with a double wall, 16 feet high and 15 yards in circumference.

At Edins Ha', a mile below St. Bathans, on the Whitadder, among the Lammermoor Hills in Scotland, there stands another Pictish brosh. It is formed by two concentric circular brick walls, with the space between arched over and divided into small chambers, forming a cellular wall 15 feet high, which encloses an area 50 feet in diameter.

What are known as sculptured stones constitute a peculiar legacy of ancient times: they occur in Scotland, Wales and the northern part of England, and are ascribed to the days of the Christian Celts. Specimens are to be seen at either side of the gateway of the churchyard at Kirkmadrine, two miles south-west of Sandhear, in Wigtonshire, Scotland.

Others are to be found in the ruins of Withorn Priory, 11 miles south of Wigton, in the same district. This was the Priory which St. Ninian founded in the year 397, of which only the chancel and west doorway still remain standing. Incidentally, this was the first stone church to be built in Scotland.

The High Cross in the church of the village of Ruthwell on the Solway Firth, seven miles from Annan, in Dumfries-shire, also belongs to this same period: it is a Runic monument with a Runic inscription.

In the village of Fowlis Wester on the Almond, five miles north-east of Crieff, in Perthshire, Scotland, there is a remarkable collection of these ancient relics, including a double stone circle, a cromlech, several forts and a sculptured cross.

Rossie Priory, three miles north of Inchture, likewise in Perthshire, stands in a wonderfully beautiful park of 200 acres, belonging to Lord Kinnaird. Here too one may see these interesting sculptured stones. The village of Glamis, to the south-east of Forfar, in Forfarshire, also boasts three roughly-worked stones, on which are depicted warriors, animals and weapons.

Eassie, in the same district as Glamis, also proudly claims its sculptured stone, and an interesting circular mound with traces of a ditch around it. Another relic of the same era is an inscribed monolith in the churchyard of Aberlemno, five miles north-east of Forfar, while three similar stones are to be seen in the church.

In the village of Meigle, five miles north-east of Coupar Angus in Perthshire, twenty sculptured stones were found, some of them in the school playground and some of them in the churchyard: they have now been removed to the little museum in the village.

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One of them is believed to be the tombstone of Queen Vanora, wife of King Arthur, who was carried off and dishonoured by the Picts. She escaped, but on her return, so it is said, her ruthless husband ordered her to be torn in pieces by wild beasts.

The tumulus near Belmont Castle is said to be the site of the battle in which Macbeth encountered Macduff and lost his usurped kingdom and his life.

The most remarkable stone obelisk in Scotland which has come down to us from the past is Sweno's Stone, one mile east of Forres, on the Findhorn, in Elgin, Scotland. It was there that peace was concluded in the 11th century between Malcolm II and the Danish invader Sweno. The monument is 20 feet high, of sandstone and is ornamented with sculptured figures of horses and men, and Runic devices.

Near by this monument, some human skeletons and a stone coffin were dug up.

The Witches' Stone is also preserved here: it is one of three similar ones which marked the spot where three witches were buried alive, in barrels, for witchery against King Duffus.

In Wales too, at three separate places, sculptured stones have been found.

In the little town of Llantwit Major, five miles south of Cwobridge, there is a "new" church, dating from the 13th century—not so very new after all. The "old" church is more than a hundred years earlier and in it are sculptured stones which are supposed to represent the memorial to St. Illtyd, who founded his celebrated School of Divinity here in the 6th century.

In the Park at Margam, four miles south-east of Aberavon, one may also see some remarkable inscribed stones and monoliths.

And, thirdly, the treasury of the church of St. Tyddud at Penmachno, four miles south of Bettws-y-Coed, in Carnarvonshire, contains four inscribed stones.

In the village of Wilmington, in South Sussex, six miles north-west of Eastbourne, there "stands" on the hillside the "Green Man," or, as he is sometimes called, the "Long Man" of Wilming-ton, cut in the turf. We are told that originally he stood with his arms partially extended, the right hand clasping a staff and the left one a scythe: the figure was restored in 1893.

Another "Long Man" has, since ancient days, adorned the slopes of Trendle Hill, near Cerne Abbas, seven miles north of Dorchester in mid-Dorset. He stands 180 feet high. His left arm is extended and in his right hand he holds a knotted club. He is variously described; according to some, he represents the Saxon god Heil, or Hercules; others say he is of Celtic origin, while yet others believe this to be a memorial to Cenric, son of Cuthred, King of the West Saxons. But the simple folk who live

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nearby laugh at these explanations of "mere scientists," and declare with unquestioning certainty that this figure commemorates the slaying, by the local peasants, of a giant who used to ravage the district.

\* \* \* \*

Rome in Britain!

How wide is the range, over time and space, of the curiosity collectors' activities. Every new day brings promise of unsuspected surprises on—or, more correctly, under—British soil. There are not many countries in the world which can claim to have reconstructed an old civilisation as has been done here on a foundation of what is largely unexplored ground.

Sometimes stumbling upon them by sheer chance—and sometimes as the reward of painstaking investigation—excavators, or just ordinary people digging as part of their everyday work, have laid bare the secrets of hundreds of years ago. Theories have been corroborated and hitherto unknown facts established, until the past is conjured up and made to live again, sometimes actually in its material form, before our astonished eyes.

What are perhaps the best preserved remains of a Roman city come from Caerwent, in Monmouthshire, from the site of Venta Silurium, a station of the Second Legion. The most valuable of the finds unearthed here are housed in the famous Caerlon Museum.

Among the most remarkable Roman relics to be seen anywhere outside Italy are those to be found on British soil, in Bath, the city which takes its name from the magnificent baths of the Emperor Claudius.

But this is not the only place in Britain where baths from the luxury-lapped golden age of Rome's prosperity have been brought to light. One of the finest outside Bath is to be seen in London, in Strand Lane, W.C.2, just off the Strand opposite Bush House, in the basement of the Coal Exchange. Another example of this type of structure is to be found at Wroxeter, on the Severn in Shropshire; this was a public bath belonging to the Roman settlement of Uriconium. The various valuable objects found on this site are to be seen in the Museum of the Natural History and Antiquarian Society at Shrewsbury.

Private baths, from the sumptuously appointed houses of wealthy Romans, are also to be seen in parts of Cumberland. One example is in Old Carlisle, three miles south-west of Wington, the Roman Olenacum; another in the village of Plumpton on the River Petteril; and at the Roman station of Bremeteuracum, on the Carlisle road; others are at Bimchester in Durham and Lancaster, further south.

The bath was also a prominent feature of the Roman villa

unearthed at Spoonley Wood in Gloucestershire, seven miles north-east of Cheltenham, and in the ruins of the villa at Chedworth on the River Colne, on the estate of the Earl of Eldon. This villa also contained mosaics of astoundingly delicate workmanship, as well as a heating installation.

But the legionaires also had their baths—so, at least, one infers from the finding of these “modern conveniences” on the sites of what are known to have been garrisons and forts. As examples, we may mention the remains at Slack, near Huddersfield, in the West Riding of Yorkshire; at Inchtuthill in Perthshire; at Vespasian’s Camelon, a suburb of Falkirk in Stirlingshire; at Canovium, the present-day Caerhun, near Conway in Carnarvonshire; and in the great camp of Gelligaer, in the north of Glamorgan in North Wales.

A happy hunting-ground for those who collect Roman relics is the erstwhile great Six-Gate-Station of Cilurnum, on the west bank of the North Tyne, in Northumberland. This station was established about the year 80 by Julius Agricola, the Governor of Britain, and was joined up forty years later with Hadrian’s Wall. All the existing relics from the sumptuous quarters of those who served Rome here are to be found in the world-famous collection at Chesters, a large mansion. This wonderful museum contains two rare items which may well excite the envy of collectors the world over. They figure thus in the catalogue :

“No. 124. Headless stone figure of a goddess standing on a bull, regarded as the most precious treasure hitherto yielded by the excavation of Roman camps,” and

“No. 272. Steele, or milestone of unusual shape, from the Stanegate, near Crindles Dyke Farm.” This is the only monument hitherto discovered in Britain which bears the name of the Emperor Probus.

Roman villas have been brought to light in many parts of the country. Many of them have, unfortunately, been only partially recovered. Perhaps the finest specimen of the Roman villa as yet found in Britain is that at Brading, on Morton Farm, in the Isle of Wight. It bears witness to the elegant taste and luxurious comforts indulged in by these ancient colonists. The mosaic floorings which has emerged almost unimpaired from the dust of centuries, is a priceless work of art.

Almost equally beautiful must have been the villa at Woodchester, in Gloucestershire, on the road between Gloucester and Bath; but it is not in as good a state of preservation. In the Priory garden are the remains of two square courtyards, one 150 feet and the other 90 feet long, of a gallery, and a large room some 50 feet long, with a paved floor.

In the churchyard at Woodchester there is a fragment of tes-



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seledated pavement, as fine as any found elsewhere in Europe, with an area of 49 square feet. The central design shows Orpheus playing on his lyre, surrounded by the birds and animals attracted and charmed by his music. This work of art is attributed to the first century, the Golden Age.

One of the favourite haunts of archaeologists is the famous villa at Bignor, six miles from Petworth, in Sussex. It was built on the same plan as that at Woodchester, with its courtyards, gallery and baths, and was evidently a villa in the grand manner. It covered an area of 650 by 350 feet, and the site has yielded fragments of Doric columns, magnificent mosaics and other interesting treasures. It lies on the Roman road known as Stane Street.

Lydney, a village on the main road from Gloucester to Chepstow and Swansea, also boasts its Roman mansion. It occupies the site of the erstwhile Abona, which is known to have accommodated at its hospice those who came to visit the neighbouring shrines of Nodens. These shrines consist of a very fine specimen of an ancient British altar and a temple dedicated to the worship of an unidentified deity—Nodens, or Nodons.

Parts of another Roman villa have been found at Chedworth, near Cheltenham, and are now the property of the National Trust, which has established a remarkable museum nearby.

London, of course, has also yielded traces of Roman villas.

The City Museum in Leicester has an interesting collection of articles excavated there on the site of the Roman settlement of Ratae.

Cirencester, in Gloucestershire, marks the site of the Roman *Corinium*; tessellated pavements, columns and portions of wall as well as inscribed stones from a cemetery, betray the earlier presence here of a whole colony of villas as at Lincoln—the *Lindcoit* of the Britons and *Lindum Colonia* of the Romans; other traces of the Roman occupation have been uncovered at Canterbury and Gloucester. The last-named served as a base for the Legions in their eternal struggle with the Iberians; here the leaders of the Legions evidently built beautiful villas in which they spent the uneventful days when they were untroubled by the enemy.

At Lyme Regis, on the coast of Dorset, between Dorchester and Exeter, there is an exceptionally well preserved example of a Roman villa.

Near the village of Stonesfield, on the old Roman road, Akeman Street, in Oxfordshire, a Roman tessellated pavement was brought to light in a field, known as Chest-hill-acre. Apart from the pavement, which measures 35 by 20 feet, the ground plan of the various rooms of the villa can also be seen.

Similar pavements were discovered at Winterton, in Durham, on the Winteringham road. In Chester, in Bridge Street, are the

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remains of a large building dating from the time of the Roman occupation of Britain; another similar building appears to have stood at North Leigh, in Oxfordshire.

Country houses belonging to this same epoch have been excavated in various parts of the country. A whole group of houses was uncovered within the walls of Silchester, in Hampshire, which marks the site of the Romano-British Calleva, which is three miles north-west of Bramley. Within the Roman Wall, which at this point is 12 feet high and one and threequarter feet thick, the traces of about eighty complete houses, with their private baths, were unearthed, incomplete remains of others, four temples, and in addition the remains of a Christian church dating from the fourth century. Many of the objects found on this site are to be seen in the Romano-British collection at the Reading Museum.

At Carisbrook, in the Isle of Wight, at the foot of the Castle Hill, there evidently nestled a charming village, on the banks of the little river Lukeley. During the restoration of the Castle, the remains of a Roman castle and villa were unearthed. It has mosaic pavements and a semi-circular bath, which, however, is not in a very good state of preservation. The whole structure covers an area of 120 by 50 feet.

Near the station at Dorchester, in Dorset, one comes upon Mambury Rings. These mounds are a legacy from prehistoric times, being attributed to the late Neolithic or early Bronze Age, somewhere about 1800 B.C. But in Roman times these already archaic structures formed part of the world-famous amphitheatre of Durnovaria.

Another Roman theatre has been excavated at St. Albans, the Roman Verulamium, in Hertfordshire. This site is still yielding many interesting and valuable prizes as it is gradually being recovered from its bed in the hillside.

Much more fragmentary are the traces which still remain of the theatre at Caerlon, in Monmouthshire, on the north bank of the River Usk. Both Geoffrey of Monmouth and Tennyson identified these remains with the Round Table of the Arthurian legend, where King Arthur initiated his famous order of knighthood.

What must have been smaller and less important stages have been discovered at Charterhouse, in the Mendip Hills; at Camalodunum in Essex, the Colchester of our own day, and at Wroxeter in Shropshire. From the circular depressions or enclosures which have been found, it is supposed that there were also Roman amphitheatres at the Roman station of Borcovicus, on the Wall—the site of the present-day Housesteads in Northumberland; at Tomeny-Mur in North Wales; at Yns-y-Bordan, near Llandovery in South Wales and at what is now known as St. Piran's Round in Cornwall.

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Among the more famous of the world's Roman remains are the two great defensive walls. Of the two, that built by Hadrian—and known as Hadrian's Wall—in the year 122 A.D. is the more impressive. It originally ran from Bowness, on the Solway Firth, to Wallsend on the Tyne, right across England, passing on its 73½ miles length no less than 23 cities. It was from 18 to 20 feet high and six to 10 feet thick. This was the great Roman bulwark—perhaps the greatest military structure from that epoch still extant—designed to hold back the marauding barbarian hordes of the North.

The best description of this great monument is to be found in the Rev. J. Collingwood Bruce's 440-page book, "*The Roman Wall*," which brings the account of the excavations and discoveries made by archaeologists down to the present day.

The second great rampart is the Antonine Wall, which marked the northern boundary of the Roman Empire. It takes its name from the Emperor Antoninus Pius (86—161) and stretched across Scotland from Old Kilpatrick on the Clyde to Bridgeness, near Corriden on the Forth, a distance of 36½ miles. The wall and ditch can be traced most of the way across the country, but are best seen at Falkirk.

Numerous forts dating from the time of the Roman occupation of Britain have been uncovered.

At Ancaster, in Lincolnshire, there was a fort commanding the great Roman highway of Ermine Street. One can still make out the form of the bastions which reinforced the corners of the stronghold.

One of the best preserved and most complete specimens of Roman camps is that to be seen at Birrens, in Dumfriesshire. This was originally dominated by a fort which was dispersed in 1820, when a rich harvest of relics, including inscriptions, was disclosed.

The most important fortified camp of the whole district was that at Newstead, near Melrose, in Roxburghshire, of which a considerable portion has been preserved to our own day. But for completeness this is surpassed by that at Gelligaer, in North Glamorgan-shire, North Wales.

Much more is known about the famous Roman Camp near Ardoch House, Ardoch, in Perthshire. This is the site of the ancient Lindum, a town belonging to the Damnonii. The camp measured 2,800 by 1,950 feet, and afforded a camping ground for no less than 26,000 Roman legionaires. At Lyne, likewise in Perthshire, one may see the traces of Raudal's Walls, which enclosed a camp, shaped like a parallelogram, measuring 850 by 750 feet.

At Camelon, on the outskirts of Falkirk in Stirlingshire, Vespasian built a huge fortress, traces of which may still be seen.

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Burgh Castle, near Belton, in Suffolk, marks the site of the Roman station of Garinonum. Ruins of this camp tell an eloquent tale of the might of Rome, for the camp, again shaped like a parallelogram, measured 214 by 107 yards and had massive walls of brick and flint.

In Kent, at Richborough, we come upon another most interesting trace of a Roman fortress. This outpost of empire must have been very important, guarding as it did the chief port of entry into Roman Britain.

Pevensey Castle, near Pevensey in Sussex, was also a fortress of Roman origin; the later buildings were constructed with the material taken from the Roman fort. The outer walls are entirely Roman: they are about 20 feet high and some 12 feet thick. In the enclosure, which covers an area of about eight acres, may be seen traces of an inner fortification of quadrangular form, which was strengthened with round towers. On the north and west sides may be seen indications of the moat which was traversed by a drawbridge.

Three and a quarter miles from Carrovan, the last station on the Wall in Northumberland, one finds the remains of the twelfth station, Ambolanna, where Birdoswald, in Cumberland, now stands. No less than twelve inscriptions mentioning the name of Ambolanna have been found here. It was strategically placed, crowning a high crag commanding the bank of the River Irthing to the south and protected on the north by a deep cleft. The ramparts, which were about five feet thick, are still in fairly good condition and two of the gateways are still standing, one a double one and one single, on the east and west sides of the enclosure.

Among the ruins some interesting statuary was found, notably a seated figure of Dea Mater and some rudely modelled statuettes of Hercules. Two miles to the west of this settlement a number of interesting antiquities were found by the Coome Crag; here Roman inscriptions were uncovered and a country girl also discovered a beautiful Roman altar, set in the side of the steep cliff. It is four feet high and the inscription mentions Julius Marcellinus.

A portion of the Roman Wall round London may be seen in an enclosure in the street known as London Wall, in the City, not far from St. Giles's Church, Cripplegate.

For those who are specially interested in Roman excavations in London, the following museums and collections are of special interest: British Museum, Great Russell Street, W.C.1; London Museum, Lancaster House, St. James's, London, S.W.1; Guildhall Museum, Basinghall Street, London, E.C.2; Westminster Abbey Chapter House, Westminster; Goldsmiths' Hall, Foster Lane, E.C.; St. Paul's Cathedral Library, London, E.C.4; Overseas Bank, Gracechurch Street, London, E.C.2; Phoenix Assurance Company's

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Offices, King William Street, London, E.C.; London Commercial Sale Rooms, Mincing Lane, E.C.3; Guardian Assurance Company's Offices, King William Street, London, E.C.; also the Caerlon Museum, near Newport, Monmouth and the Cambridge Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology.

But to return to the remains of Roman fortifications: Slight traces of an early fortress have been preserved at Bitterne two miles north-east of Southampton, in Hampshire. Many of the objects dug up from the neighbouring settlement of Clausentum may be seen in the British Museum in London.

In many places one can still find wall fortresses.

One sees them in Cheshire, at Wilderspool, and at the neighbouring Warrington, a mile and a half to the south, and especially in Chester, itself formerly the important Roman station of Deva, on the River Dee. It was here that the 20th Legion was stationed and, if one studies the direction of the streets as they lie to-day, its former plan and function become obvious.

Among many other ruins, at Haltwhistle, 15 miles west of Hexham in Northumberland, near Hadrian's Wall, one can discern those of a fortified wall. At High Rochester, in Kent, one may see Roman ramparts and at South Fields, in Durham, it is easy to find evidence of Roman fortification works. In Westmorland, in the village of Hardknots, are traces of a fortified wall, and similar remains are to be seen in Derbyshire, at Brough, a mile and a half east of Hope, near the meeting of the rivers Noe and Bradwell. Here, at Halsteads, the spade turned up a rich harvest of urns—some 1,800 of them—swords, spears, bridles, bits, busts of deities, and gold coins with the impress of the Emperor, which fixes their date at about 31 B.C.

Another place in Derbyshire where traces of a fortified wall have been found is Melandra Castle, in the hamlet of Gamesley, a mile west of Dinting Station. "Melandra Castle," or Melandra, as it is sometimes called, stands at the junction of the Course Brook and the Etherow. It is roughly rectangular, with rounded corners; the sole entrance was through a single arch with three double gateways on the south side. The whole covers an area of 336 acres and comprises a building with several chambers. A great deal of pottery and a number of coins were discovered here, dating from the period 68 to 388. In the ancient city of Ribchester, in Lancashire, which was formerly the Roman station of Coccium, the walls of the fort may still be seen. In the churchyard here, fragments of statues, coins, a stone altar from the time of Marcus Aurelius, and portions of a temple dedicated to Minerva, were uncovered.

One of the rarest relics of Roman domination in Britain is the great multiangular tower at York. This decagonal structure, which now stands on a piece of land belonging to the Yorkshire Philoso-

## 1,000 CURIOSITIES OF BRITAIN

phical Society, was formerly a corner bastion of some great Roman fortress, and was built of rubble. Other remains of Roman fortifications were unearthed near Monkbar.

One of the most familiar testimonies to the great skill of the Roman builders is the tower of the lighthouse at Dover, in Kent. The main part of this structure, which through its long life has brought comfort and safety to so many storm-tossed mariners, was first raised by the ingenuity of the Romans, though it was extended subsequently by both Saxon and Norman.

When the Romans landed at Pevensey Bay, in Sussex, they had with them a dog, Bur. Following the troops on their march inland, he got so besmirched with mud and clay that they had to stop and wash him, and the place where this happened is now called Burwash.

At Upper Halliford—or, to give it its earlier name, Harley Ford—one may see the Cowey Stakes, which mark the ford at which Julius Caesar took his legions across the stream. It lies a mile and a half from the town of Sunbury-on-Thames, upstream from London.

Among the innumerable stones which have special associations with the Roman occupation of Britain, there are a few which have curious histories. Of these, perhaps the most famous is the "London Stone," to be seen now in Cannon Street, E.C.4. It was originally a Roman "milliarium," or milestone, and is now to be seen in a stone case, built into the outer wall on the south side of the Church of St. Swithin. Camden, in his "*Britannia*" writes :

"The stone called London Stone, from its situation in the centre of the longest diameter of the City, I take to have been a miliary, like that in the Forum at Rome, from which all the distances were measured."

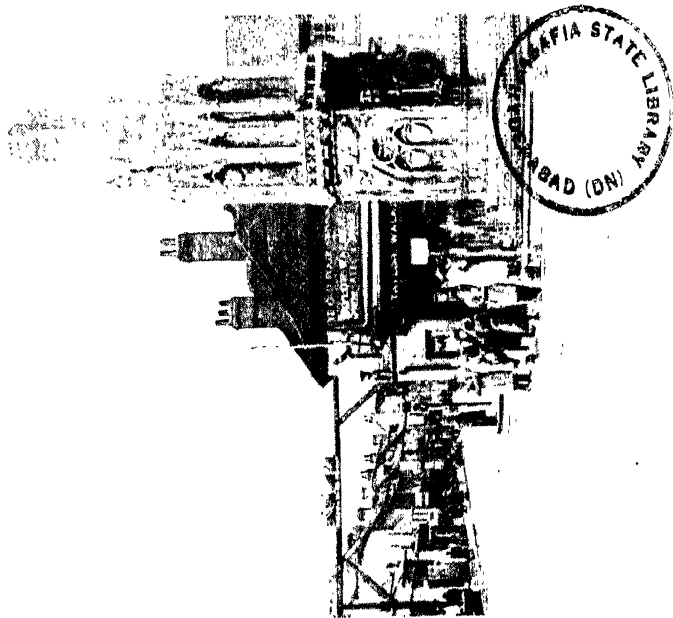
Until 1742 it stood on the south side of Cannon Street, but in that year it was moved to a more northerly site, and eventually was placed in its present position at the end of the 18th century.

It owes its international fame to the arch-rebel, Jack Cade, who smote the stone with his blood-stained sword in the year 1450 after storming London Bridge. "Now is Mortimer lord of this city!" he confidently boasted as he struck the stone. The incident is given in Shakespeare's *Henry VI*, Part II, Act IV, Scene 6, as follows :

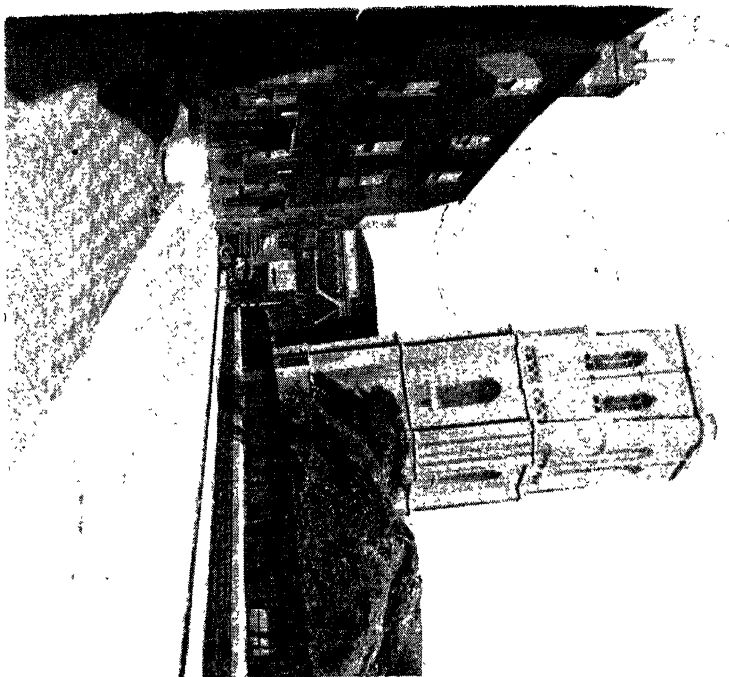
"Cade : Now is Mortimer lord of this city. And here, sitting upon London Stone, I charge and command that the conduit run nothing but claret wine this first year of our reign. And now henceforward it shall be treason for any that calls me Lord Mortimer."



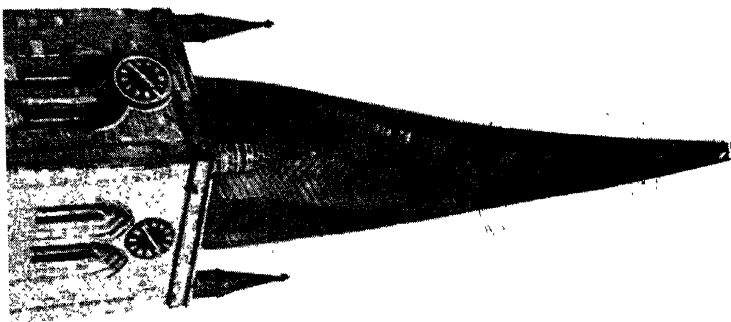
XXI. WHERE MONMOUTH'S MEN SHARPENED THEIR  
SCYTHES BEFORE THE BATTLE OF SEDGEMOOR.  
CHEDZOY CHURCH, SOMERSET



XXII. QUEEN ELEANOR CROSS, WALTHAM CROSS,  
HERTS



XXIII. LEANING TOWER OF TEMPLE CHURCH,  
BRISTOL.



XXIV. TWISTED CHURCH SPIRE, CHESTERFIELD.



## CURIOSITIES OF ANCIENT BRITAIN

The poet Dryden, in his "*Cock and the Fox*," also mentions the stone.

"The bees in arms  
Drive headlong from the waxen cells in swarms.  
Jack Straw at London Stone, with all his rout  
Struck not the city with so loud a shout."

A chronicler from the days of Henry VIII also speaks of it, as it was in his days :

"The late Earl of Oxford, father to him that now liveth, hath been noted within these forty years to have ridden into this city, and so to his house by London Stone, with eighty gentlemen in a livery of Reading tawny, and chains of gold about their necks, before him, and one hundred tall yeomen in the like livery to follow him, without chains, but all having his cognizance of the blue boar embroidered on their left shoulder."

In Salisbury Museum there is a whole series of valuable Roman stones. The Town Museum, Leicester, also possesses a particularly famous milestone from the days of the Romans. It was found in the year 1771 near Leicester, on the Foss Way, and the inscription runs :

"IMP CAESAR DIV TRAIAN HADRIAN AUG PONT IV  
COS III A RATIS II."

Fifty yards from the actual Roman road near Otmoor and Oddington in Oxfordshire, there stands Joseph's Stone, which is also a Roman milestone.

The oldest stones from the time of Vespasian are at Horncastle in Lincolnshire, on the rivers Bain and Waring. This was the site of the Roman station Ranovallum, and from here three Roman roads radiated.

At Clent, near Hagley in Worcestershire, you may be called upon to admire some ancient upright stones. But these are not relics of Roman times : they are shameless forgeries from the 18th century.

The only authentic, documented bust of Cicero still extant, is that on the staircase at Apsley House, Hyde Park Corner, London.

Apart from the temples in various parts of England which have been mentioned in passing, there are others which have been excavated.

At Rudchester, in Northumberland, one finds traces of five altars dedicated to Mithras, and not far from them, hewn out of the solid rock, a large cistern, some twelve feet long, known locally as a "bath" and probably connected with the altars.

At Burnham in Kent there is an underground chamber which

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is also regarded as a mithraic cave. Although no actual traces of altars or other sacred objects have come to light, tradition has long linked this cavern with religious practices in Roman times.

The water goddess Conventina is tutelary deity of a temple of which the ruins may be seen at Carraw in Northumberland, westward of one of the Roman forts.

An octagonal building brought to light at Weyrock, near Laurence Waltham in Berkshire, is also believed to have been a Roman temple.

In Bath, at the north-west corner of the Roman bath, there is a remarkable building which was a temple dedicated to Minerva. Many sculptured stones were excavated on this site.

The finest collection of Roman altars is that to be seen in the Museum of Cilurnum, near Chollerford in Northumberland.

The only church which has survived from the Roman epoch of which one knows with certainty that it was a Christian place of worship is that at Silchester, in Hampshire. It has neither columns, doors nor windows, but resembles the temples which have been found in France. It measures 42 feet long by 27 feet wide. There are some—though this is a hotly-contested theory—who claim that St. Martin's Church, Canterbury, and the chapel of Dover Castle also date from this Roman era, but the question has never been definitely settled.

Among the ruins which were excavated over a large area at Caerwent, in Monmouthshire, there are some which are said to be those of a Christian church dating from the time of the Roman occupation. But here again, definite proof is absent.

## CHAPTER V

### THE CONTINENT IN BRITAIN

FROM time immemorial the British Isles have stubbornly held aloof from the sister continent of Europe, separated not so much in space as by differences in speech, culture, manners, daily routine, philosophy of life, in eating and social distinctions, but most of all in politics and even in the direction in which their people travel.

Great Britain is actually proud of her isolation and insularity, using the term "continental" in an almost deprecatory sense and even appearing to take offence at the thought that she is removed from the mainland by a mere "crossing" and not by a forbidding expanse of storm-swept ocean!

And so one may well be the more surprised to find cropping up at odd spots here and there in these islands curiosities which cannot fail to remind one of the Continent.

A first expedition into Continental Britain might be to the Alps.

Do not be dismayed: this is neither a joke nor a geographical error.

For the British Isles do boast their own Alps, recognised not only by enthusiastic amateurs, but even in official publications.

The "British Alps" are in Monmouthshire. Here, on the Sugar Loaf, Blorenges and Skirrid Fawn, one can climb to a height of 2,000 feet and, just as in the genuine Alps, one can wander along enchanting valleys and, exploring the banks of the lovely Wye, experience all the rapture of the Continental Alps.

On British soil too, is "Little Switzerland."

This sleepy corner, known and appreciated only by the few who really know their native land, lies between Twym Barlwm and Mynydd Machen in Wales.

Everyone who knows the charms of Switzerland will at once admit that these two places have every right to the title.

Another Swiss feature is found in the city of Chester.

In the Rows at Northgate one may conjure up the illusion of standing in Berne or Thun, in the shadow of the arcades which are so characteristic of these two Swiss cities.

We may find yet another Swiss feature within the confines of this island.

My readers will know the unique Hospice of St. Bernard of Savoy one of the foremost landmarks of Switzerland. And no less

surely they will have heard of the sagacious St. Bernard dogs, and the many touching stories of their devotion, and the lives they have saved in seeking out the snowbound and bringing them food and help.

These faithful animals once became extinct, but man in his ingenuity set to work to breed the race anew.

I said "unique," but actually the Hospice is not the only one of its kind. It has one daughter institution: the Hospice at Hornchurch, in Essex.

Here, though neither the eternally snow-clad peaks nor the famous dogs are in evidence, the same humanitarian spirit prevails.

Italy is a country which Britons have always delighted to visit, and they may likewise find many reflections of it and associations in their own land.

John Ruskin, a real connoisseur of beauty, was loud in his praises of the winter resort of Torquay, with its mild, sunlit climate and lovely blue bay. He hailed it as the "English Italy" a designation which has since been adopted in descriptive brochures and guide-books.

Two cities vie with each other for the coveted honour of the title of the "British Rome."

It would be a hard task for anyone who knows these cities and their prototype to judge which should be awarded the prize.

One of these "Romes" is Bristol.

If ever a lover of the Holy City has wandered through her cathedral aisles, and admired her other lovely churches, he could understand that those who live in Bristol may well claim that their city is "Rome in England."

There is, however, another claimant to the title: this is Canterbury, spiritual centre of the Anglican Church and seat of the Primate.

Canterbury, with her wonderful cathedral, is indeed "British Rome." For close on 1,500 years she has held this pre-eminent position, ever since the day when the Benedictine monk Augustine, with his brother missionaries from Rome, came to preach at the court of the Saxon King Ethelbert and his Christian wife, Bertha, and won their realm for Christianity—so long has Canterbury merited the name of "Rome."

In detail, too, Rome may be discovered within the shores of Britain.

In England there is a copy of that most beautiful of Roman churches, St. Peter's; it is none other than St. Paul's Cathedral, London.

There is also a faithful copy of the Papal Throne on English soil, to be seen in Westminster Cathedral, where on special occasions it is used by the Archbishop.

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Another similar, but less widely known instance of a copy is provided in the case of the famous Coronation Chair which stands in Westminster Abbey, its counterpart being the carved oak throne in St. George's Chapel at Windsor.

Go to Birmingham and ask the way to the Town Hall, which stands in the heart of the city.

You will catch a glimpse of it from some distance away. If you measured the building, you would find that the pillars of the Birmingham Town Hall are 36 feet high and are exact replicas of the originals in Rome.

Inside this building, however, it is not Jupiter, but rather the Muse Polyhymnia, who is worshipped.

The hall holds an audience of two thousand, and if the music is silent here, the fanfares and drums of politics are by no means muffled, and often muster no less than five thousand listeners.

At Shrewsbury is another copy of a masterpiece of Roman art: the Farnese Statue of Hercules.

Britain also has her Naples—on Weymouth Bay.

The famous Leaning Tower is at Pisa, which, with its Cathedral and University, lies on the Arno, in central Italy.

One may think it an oversight that this Leaning Tower was not added to the seven wonders of the world.

But has anyone ever heard of the leaning towers of Great Britain?

One is to be found at Caerphilly, a market town in Glamorgan-shire, where it forms part of a castle, now in ruins but, in fact, never completed, dating from the time of Henry III.

It towers skywards for some 50 feet above the ruins below, a memorial to Owen Glendower, who once entrenched himself here, and whose stronghold afterwards became his prison.

Is it merely the crumbling decay of age, is it the grim outcome of an attempt to blow up the fortress, or is it just the result of faulty foundations which gives this tower its bias?

Who can say?

All that we know is that the tower now leans, and leans very considerably, a worthy rival to its more famous counterpart at Pisa.

Another much-vaunted example of Italian architecture is the famous Bridge of Sighs which links palace and prison across the canal in Venice: this too may be admired in England, for a covered bridge spans the western end of New College Lane, Oxford, and there is another over the Cam at the Cambridge "Backs."

Perhaps it will not be quite so seriously disturbing to one's accepted ideas on the subject of geography if one is now asked to modify all former ideas on the subject of the Styx, the underworld river of Greek mythology. Not only Hades is watered by this river: its streams may be found in England too, where more-

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over they have an incalculable advantage over the fabled waters of the legendary Styx, which no man could find until his death.

Pluck up sufficient courage to penetrate the depths of a large cavern, and it is possible to see the English Styx and still live. At the far end of the Peak Cavern, or Devil's Hole, it flows into the High Peak, some six hundred feet above sea level, near the hamlet of Castleton, in Derbyshire.

Directing our steps to a more northerly region of the Continent, England has her "Little Denmark," pleasantly situated in the neighbourhood of Flamborough Head in the East Riding of Yorkshire, on the coastline between Filey and Bridlington. The name is well chosen, for in this British Denmark one finds all the charm of that northern kingdom, the North Sea and all the advantages of the Danish climate; the attractive, typically Danish landscape, with hills and cliffs; even the animals and plants are strikingly reminiscent of those to be seen on the opposite shore of the North Sea. In Lincolnshire England also has her Holland.

Having passed in review, as curiosities, the Alps, Switzerland, Italy, the Underworld, Denmark and Holland, one can return via "Germany in Britain."

Coming from the Continent by way of the Hook of Holland and Harwich, one may pass the time before the train leaves Harwich by visiting the neighbouring seaside resort of Dovercourt, in Essex.

Near the lighthouse, whose beams flash out a timely warning of the dangers of the Andrew's sandbank, one finds a window which was dedicated by Germany's last Kaiser, Wilhelm II, to the honoured memory of 7,000 British heroes who lost their lives here when returning from the wars against Napoleon, the then common European foe and disturber of Europe's peace. Many British soldiers who, at the beginning of the last century, entered the forces of Prussia to fight against the Corsican dictator, now lie buried at Dovercourt.

- A church which is reminiscent of Germany is to be found at Sompot, in Sussex. It has a tower built on exactly the same plan as those of many of the churches along the banks of the Rhine. Not even the oldest records have yielded any explanation of this coincidence.

The next German association centres round a grave in the cemetery at Highgate, on the Northern Heights of London. Here lie the mortal remains of Karl Heinrich Marx, the founder of international Marxism, and his burial place has become an object of pilgrimage for the numberless adherents to his doctrines. Marx lived at Hampstead from 1849 until his death in 1883, and most of his more important works were written in this idyllically beautiful suburb of London.

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Naturally England also has her Rhine, or, more correctly, as in the case of Rome, she has two.

Rhine number one is the Dart, near Kingswear in Devonshire, and this is the Rhine to the life. But if we should come under spell of the other English Rhine, where the Wye flows between Rhayader and Hay, or between Goodrich below Ross and Lower Chepstow, we will admit that this river too deserves the name of Rhine.

Now a long leap, right to the most easterly limits of the Continent—Russia.

Russia in England? We can find no British Volga, no British Kremlin, but what we do find on English soil are mementoes of a great Russian who lived here for a considerable time, no less a man than the Czar Peter the Great.

He stayed at three different places in London: at 15 Buckingham Street, near the Strand; then at the "Czar's Hand" in Great Tower Street, and lastly in Norfolk Street, again near the Strand. When, in 1698, he worked as ship's boy at the London Docks, it was in the riverside alleys of Deptford that he lived and loved and came into close contact with the common people.

Another king, though he had no kingdom and no crown, also worked his way through London's streets, and died, a beggar just as in one of the old romantic tales—in a London workhouse. This was Theodore, King of Corsica.

In his early years he led a highly cultured and adventurous life and, as Baron Theodore of Neuhof, rendered the Corsicans many valuable services, which they acknowledged by acclaiming him their king. For two years he ruled over them, but meanwhile the Genoese and the French were mustering their forces against him, and he had to flee by night, leaving everything behind him.

Thus, destitute, he made his way to England, where he found a refuge and a grave in St. Anne's Tower, in Wardour and Dean Streets, near Piccadilly Circus.

Before we come to the "Great Corsican," let us turn our attention to other curiosities on English soil which are reminiscent of France.

Already in the distance we can see that famous Parisian landmark, the Eiffel Tower. Though there is a rumour that the Eiffel Tower may be demolished perhaps this would not be so serious a loss, as there would still be an Eiffel Tower elsewhere; for there is a second one. It stands on the sea front at Blackpool, in Lancashire. It is hardly likely that the English will ever allow it to be pulled down, and so it may eventually survive as the last example of that particular type of architecture; school children will learn that the Eiffel Tower is to be seen, wondered at and ascended, not in Paris, but in the

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English town of Blackpool, which will thereby acquire undying fame.

A replica of the French Mont St. Michel is to be found in Penzance in Cornwall: it is St. Michael's Mount.

There are many other more personal objects and facts which bring France to mind in England. For example, at the Wallace Collection in Hertford House, Manchester Square, London, there is a green varnished table: on this was signed the Peace of Tilsit, between Berlin and Paris.

Here too are exhibited a mirror and a stoup for holy water which belonged to Marie Antoinette. A guitar, formerly the property of Louis XV, is shown at the Museum of Ancient Musical Instruments, in Prince Consort Road, London, S.W.7.

Voltaire, the famous French philosophical writer, settled for a time in London at Maiden Lane, Covent Garden. His compatriot, the revolutionary Jean Paul Marat, lived for a long period in Church Street, Soho, London, while his contemporary, Mirabeau, occupied a house in Stratton Street, London, E.C.1.

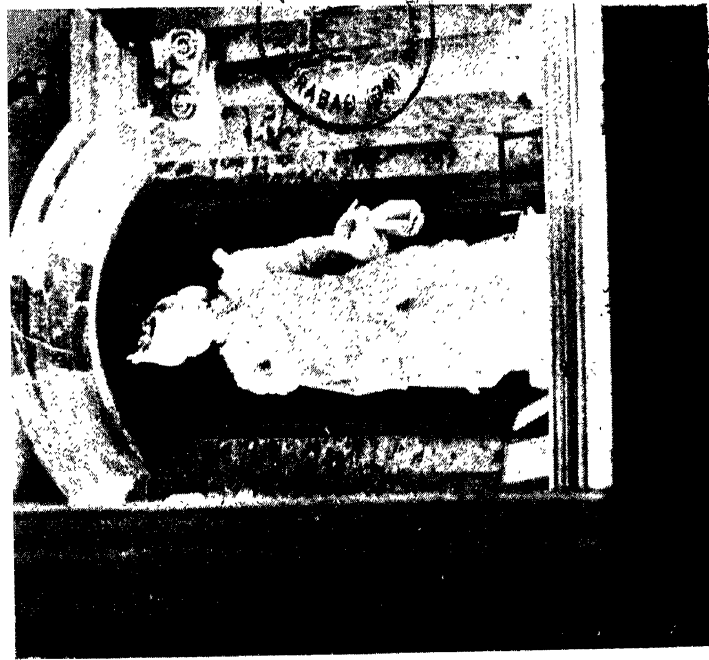
Jean Jacques Rousseau, the prophet of the Revolution, spent a considerable time with his friend, Therese le Vasseur, on British soil. Two of his books, "*Letters in Botany*" and the "*Confessions*," were written while he was at Wootton Hall, near Ellastone in Staffordshire. His neighbours thought he must be a monarch in exile and held him in high honour, respectfully keeping their distance. But to-day they will still proudly show you "Rosseau's Cave," near Ellastone, where he was particularly fond of spending his leisure hours.

Louis XVIII, son of the Dauphin and grandson of Louis XV, on his flight from Napoleon's first Empire in 1807, lived at Hartwell House, Hartwell, near Aylesbury in Buckinghamshire until 1814. This palatial residence, adorned with valuable statues and other priceless works of art, was built in 1570, dominating a finely timbered park which boasted one of the oldest avenues of trees to be found in the whole country. Later Louis moved nearer to London, living with Prince Condé and other members of the House of Condé in great style and luxury at Wanstead House, Wanstead in Essex. This splendid mansion was built in 1715 by Sir Richard Child, afterwards Earl of Tilney, and here Louis remained until he was recalled to his native land in 1814 to ascend the throne of France.

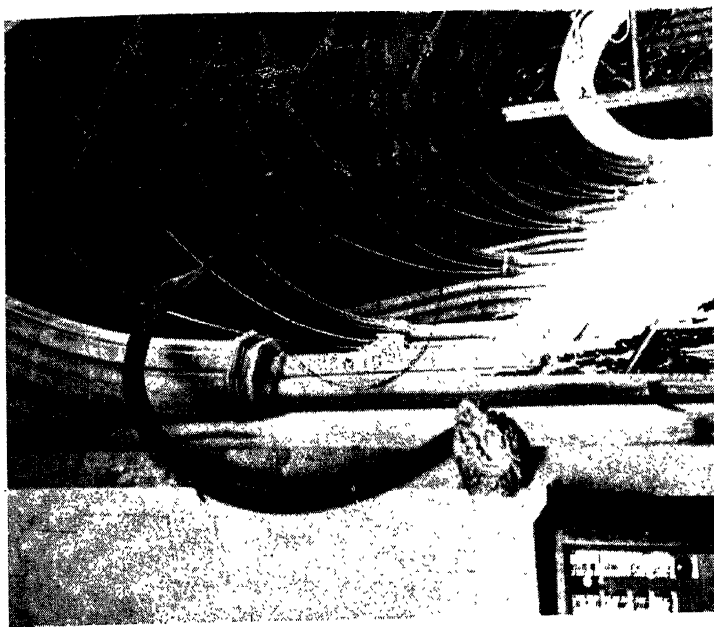
Devotees of the cult of Napoleon can admire his snuff-box at the British Museum; and at Hertford House (the Wallace Collection) they may see the inkstand which he bestowed upon Pope Pius XII.

Other mementoes are housed at the Royal United Services





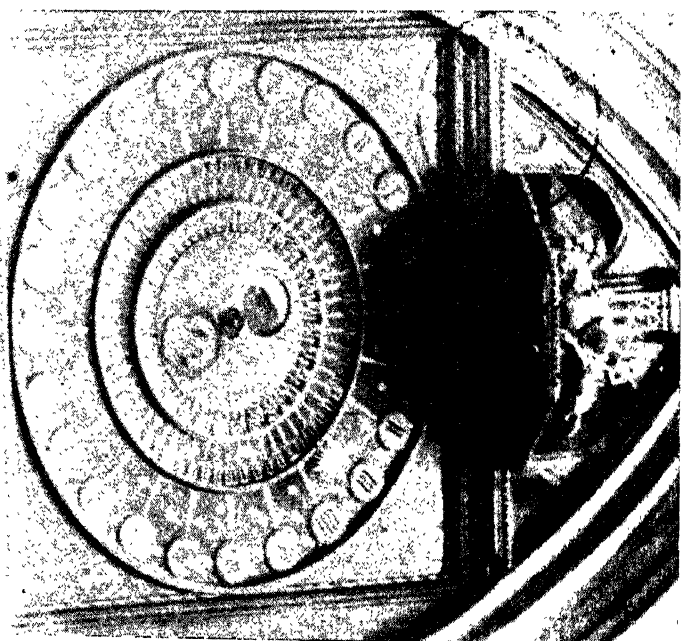
XXV. A CHANGE OF HEAD IN YARMOUTH CHURCH :  
THAT OF AN ADMIRAL HAS BEEN SUBSTITUTED FOR  
THAT OF A FRENCH KING



XXVI. RIB OF THE DUN COW IN ST. MARY'S  
REDCLIFFE, BRISTOL



XXVII. FITZGERALD'S GRAVE, BOULGE, SUFFOLK,  
WITH ROSE GROWN FROM CUTTING FROM A  
BRISTLE AT DONALD FITZGERALD'S HOME



XXVIII. FAMOUS OLD CLOCK, WELLS CATHEDRAL,  
SOMERSET



XXIX. THE HERMIT'S CAVE, KNOWN AS ANCHOR CHURCH, NEAR  
SWARKESTON, DERBY



XXX. THE VAMPIRE'S TOMB. PEMBURY



XXXI. THE DEVIL'S WEDDING, STONE CIRCLE, STANTON DREW



XXXII. ALLOWAY'S AULD HAUNTED KIRK

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Museum, which is the Banqueting Hall in Whitehall, London, S.W.1.

One of Napoleon's nieces, in 1828, was drowned off the coast of South Wales. The place is marked by a memorial tablet by the sea at Burry Port, Carmarthenshire.

Germaine de Staël, the eminent authoress, who was one of the Great Corsican's bitterest enemies, having been banished from within two hundred miles of Paris, shook the dust of her beloved France off her dainty feet and emigrated to London, where she set up house at 30 Argyll Place. It was here that she used to receive, among other brilliant leaders of Britain's social life, her friend Byron.

The fifth bell in the belfry of All Saints' Church, Ashover, near Stretton in Derbyshire, bears the following inscription :

"The old bell rang the downfall of Bonaparte and broke, April 1814."

Napoleon's brother, Joseph Bonaparte, when deposed from his kingdoms of Naples and Spain, also found sanctuary and protection on English soil. For some time, about 1820, he divided his time between his London residence in Park Crescent, Regent's Park, and his country retreat at Brettenham, a small hamlet by the River Brett in Suffolk.

Louis Philip (please note the single "p"), known to history as "Philip Egalité," Duke of Orleans, lived during his London days at 31 South Street, Grosvenor Square.

Very romantic is the story of the wanderings of a costly relic from his deserted French demesne which found its way out of France and across the Channel. During the disturbances of those fateful days a valuable window of beautiful French glass was stolen from his chapel. It passed from hand to hand, across France, to the coast, where it fell into the hands of pirates and was sold by them to an English dealer. Eventually it was purchased by a God-fearing denizen of the little village of Weeford, in Staffordshire, and presented by him to the parish church. And here, to this day, one may gaze one's fill upon this much-travelled art treasure.

Philip Egalité's son, known as Louis Philippe (this time with a double "p"), in spite of his help in raising the revolutionary forces, was compelled to leave his native land during the Revolution in 1794. He first sought asylum in Switzerland, but later fled to America. Returning to Europe in 1814, he settled for a time in England at Orleans House, Twickenham, until in 1817 he returned to France as duly elected King. He reigned for 31 years, but was then again driven into exile, returning, as ex-King, to his Twickenham residence.

His first shelter on English soil was the Bridge Inn, Newhaven,

and he later put up at the Bear, Esher. The jackboots worn by his postillion are still kept at the inn.

His son, the Duc d'Aumale, also pitched his tent at Orleans House, which became the rallying point of the French Loyalists from 1852 until the French Republic was proclaimed in 1871.

Not far from here, also in Twickenham, is York House, where another son, the Comte de Paris, spent his days in fruitless attempts to substantiate his hereditary claims to the throne of his grandfather.

Orleans House, Twickenham, also served as the centre from which another Bourbon sought to exert a controlling influence over the destinies of a land across the sea. It was here that Don Carlos, brother of Ferdinand VII of Spain, lived when he abdicated after his exploits in the civil war. And from here he made his vain efforts to win adherents for the cause of Charles V.

Lady Castlewood, mistress of the famous ambassador and constitution maker, Maurice de Talleyrand, held sway at her house at 7 Kensington Square, London, W.8, over a devoted band of her political friends. Another influential royal favourite held her court at 27 Half Moon Street, Piccadilly, London: this was the dancer Lola Montez, beloved of the Bavarian King Ludwig I.

Mrs. Howard, mistress of Napoleon III, lived in an imposing and sumptuous house at 9 Berkeley Street, Piccadilly, while Napoleon himself settled, in 1855, in a grand private mansion at Albert Gate, Hyde Park. This was the largest private house that London of that day boasted and here, ten years earlier, England's Railway King, George Hudson, had lived in grand style until his vast fortune was all squandered.

Following his defeat at Sedan in 1871, Napoleon III fled across the Channel and settled down to spend the remainder of his days with his devoted life's companion, Eugénie, and his son, at Chislehurst, in Kent, 11½ miles out of London. They made their home at Camden Palace, which was built in 1609 by William Camden. But Napoleon was destined to live here only two years, when he succumbed to physical and mental anguish at the irreparable ruin of his once brilliant dynasty.

His son later served with the English in the Zulu War, and was killed in battle. A memorial to him was erected at the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich, on the outskirts of London, where he received his training for service with the English army. Chislehurst commemorates him with a statue.

Adjoining the Roman Catholic Church of St. Mary at Chislehurst is a Mortuary Chapel, erected by Eugénie for the cherished mortal remains of her husband and son. But, bereft of relatives, countrymen and friends, she found the bitter associations of this neighbourhood intolerable and in 1881 she moved away to Farnborough Hill,

## THE CONTINENT IN BRITAIN

in Hampshire, 31 miles from London, and here she remained until her death in 1920.

Just before the turn of the century she had the Catholic Memorial Church of St. Michael built here, and to it she brought the coffins of her husband and son. The Benedictine Brothers of the French Church established an abbey nearby.

Two eminent Frenchmen of letters found a friendly reception on British soil during their more or less compulsory exile. Victor Hugo, in the full flower of his creative period, between 1855 and 1870—that is, from his fifty-third to his sixty-eighth year—lived at Hauteville House, Guernsey, in the Channel Islands. Here, only 30 miles distant from the coast of his native France, he found solace and inspiration in the peaceful setting of picturesque hills and wide seascapes.

The other was Emile Zola. He fled from the storm aroused by the publication of "*J'accuse!*", his rousing challenge in the Dreyfus affair, to the English hamlet of Penn, near Wycombe in Buckinghamshire, and lived there in exile from 1898 to 1899.

In this charming little spot the Parisian writer lived in retirement, spending many sunny hours in contemplation by the peaceful streams of the Wyck. He also visited the nearby grave of Disraeli, as well as the burial places of the most famous of the Quakers.

## CHAPTER VI

### AMERICA IN BRITAIN

THE most famous shrine which New Englanders making grateful pilgrimage to Old England will wish to visit is to be found in the little village of Scrooby on the Great North Road in Nottinghamshire.

Here one may still see the remains of what was once the sumptuous palace where Cardinal Wolsey lived as Archbishop of York, at the height of his glory. But this is not our objective; it is to the small and unassuming manor house near by that we must first and foremost turn our attention, for it was within these walls that, in the words of Longfellow, "the cornerstone of the American nation" was laid.

From 1594 to 1607, Postmaster Brewster worked in this house. Here he brought the post collected from his scattered district, and from here he distributed it. His work included tending his horses, and when it became too much for his all too meagre strength, he enlisted the help of his son, later known as Elder Brewster.

In his youth the latter had all his wits about him, making good use of his opportunities in the post office to get to know a number of people, to listen to them airing their opinions and to have his own say in discussions. Meanwhile, remarkable ideas were taking root in his youthful mind, ideas of which his father would certainly not have approved, had he known them, and which Brewster junior took care he should not know.

He was ready to pull everything to pieces—the state, religion, morality, the current philosophy of life, everything—institutions and ideas which not even the oldest and wisest in the land dared to question. In the evenings, at the end of his day's work, he met friends of his own age from his own and the neighbouring villages for stimulating and exciting talk.

The discussions in which these young people engaged behind locked doors often assumed a wildly impassioned character, and generally lasted far into the small hours of the morning. Rumours began to creep abroad, crediting this select little group with dangerous unpatriotic tendencies, though, out of respect for the aged postmaster, nobody dared to voice suspicion openly.

When, in 1607, Brewster senior closed his eyes for the last time, his 41-year-old son succeeded him as postmaster. He was now able to bring his ideas of reform out into the open. The little



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group, who now called themselves the Puritans, elected him as their leader and his home in Scrooby served as the meeting place of these separatists until eventually they had to flee to Holland.

On the occasion of the celebration of the tercentenary of the sailing of the *Mayflower*, the representatives of the Anglo-American Society, under the auspices of the Pilgrim Society of Plymouth, Massachusetts, unveiled a memorial tablet by the main door of the Brewsters' ancestral home, and the inscription is as follows :

This tablet was erected by the  
PILRIM SOCIETY OF PLYMOUTH,  
Massachusetts, United States of  
America, to mark the site of the  
ancient manor house, where lived  
WILLIAM BREWSTER  
from 1588 to 1608, and where he  
organized the Pilgrim Church, of  
which he became Ruling Elder,  
and which, in 1608, he removed to  
Amsterdam, in 1609 to Leyden,  
and in 1620 to Plymouth, where  
he died April 16, 1644.

Amongst Brewster's most zealous supporters in the days of their secret meetings in Scrooby was William Bradford, at that time about 18 years of age. He lived three miles north of Scrooby in his native village of Austerfield, in Yorkshire.

Since 1897 there has been a tablet in the Norman Church of Austerfield, set up by the Society of Mayflower Descendants and other citizens of the United States, "in memory of William Bradford, the first American citizen of the English race who bore rule by the free choice of his brethren." William Brewer became the second Governor of the Plymouth Colony in the year 1621 and retained this office, with only a short interruption, until his death. He wrote the "*Log of the Mayflower*," which has so rightly become famous as one of the most important authentic records of the time.

In the Old Hall in the market town of Gainsborough on the east bank of the Trent in north-west Lincolnshire, where John Robinson, the Pastor of the Separatist Church used to preach, there is a memorial plaque on which one may read as follows :

"To the Glory of God  
This stone in memory of  
JOHN ROBINSON, Pastor and Exile,  
was laid on June 29, 1896  
by the Hon. F. T. Bayard."

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Another place rich in associations is Boston, Lincolnshire, where, in the old Guildhall, the seven "chief offenders" of the Puritans were held under arrest. Bradford was too young to be included and was immediately set free, but the others were released only after some weeks of imprisonment. They then followed their brethren in faith via Amsterdam to Leyden.

On the West Quay, at Southampton, one may see the spot where the *Mayflower* lay waiting to take the Pilgrim Fathers on their first voyage which was to prove so momentous for the whole world. On August 15th in the year 1913, the American Ambassador, the Hon. Walter Hines Page, dedicated a stone column here on which the following words are carved :

In grateful memory of  
THOSE PILGRIMS OF THE *MAYFLOWER*  
who crossed the Atlantic in the year 1620,  
and became the founders  
of the first of those settlements  
which afterwards developed into the colonies  
of New England.  
This tablet is placed here by the  
Massachusetts Society of the Colonial Dames  
of America.

Not far from here, on another memorial tablet, we may read :

On the 15th of August 1620  
From the West Quai near this spot  
The famous *Mayflower* began her voyage  
Carrying the little company of  
PILGRIM FATHERS  
who were destined to be the founders  
of the New England States of America.

On the footway of the Barbican, Plymouth, are the words :

"MAYFLOWER  
1620."

This marks the spot where the *Mayflower* lay, waiting to start on her voyage to the New World.

And yet further on one comes across a bronze tablet, inscribed :

"On the 6th of September 1620, in the Mayoralty of Thomas Fownes, after being kindly entertained and courteously used by divers Friends there dwelling, the Pilgrim Fathers sailed from Plymouth in the *Mayflower* in the prudence of God to settle in New Plymouth, and to lay the Foundation of the New England States.—The ancient Cawsey whence they embarked was destroyed

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not many years afterwards, but the site of their Embarkation is marked by the Stone bearing the name of the *MAYFLOWER* in the pavement of the adjacent Pier. This tablet was erected in the Mayoralty of J. T. Bond, 1891, to commemorate their Departure, and the visit to Plymouth in July of that year of a number of their Descendants and Representatives."

It was on this spot that, in June 1915, the Mayor of Plymouth welcomed Lieutenant Commander A. C. Read in his American seaplane N.C. 4, after his attempt to cross the Atlantic.

In the Guildhall of Plymouth there is a stained glass window which also commemorates the sailing of the *Mayflower*. And it was here too that, on August 4th, 1917, Ambassador Page made his great speech celebrating the entry of the United States into the Great War on the side of the Allies.

From here too, Drake, Raleigh and Captain Smith—of whom more later—set out on their respective voyages into the wide world.

Many of the emigrants to the New World were parishioners of the Southwark Congregational Church which was built in 1616 in the New Kent Road, London, S.E.1. It was in honoured memory of these pioneers that this place of worship was re-named in 1860, "The Pilgrim Fathers' Memorial Church."

The only authentic original picture now extant of any of the Pilgrim Fathers is a portrait of Governor Edward Winslow. It was painted in London in the year 1651, when Winslow was 57 years of age, and until comparatively recently was in the possession of the Winslow family of Marshfield, which had remained in England. But the last descendant, Isaac Winslow of Boston, presented it to the Massachusetts Society, who hung it in their hall. A reproduction of it may be found in the "*Chronicles of the Pilgrim Fathers of the Colony of Plymouth from 1602 to 1625*," by Alexander Young, published by Charles C. Little and James Brown, of Boston. This book, with its exhaustive accounts of William Bradford, Elder Brewster, Winslow, and Robert Cushman, gives a complete picture of the history of this separatist sect from the very beginnings of the movement down to the founding of their colony across the sea. The oldest original document of the voyage is "*The Plymouth Scrap Book*," which was re-published in 1918 by C. E. Goodspeed & Company, Boston, Mass., edited by Charles Henry Pope and illustrated with numerous photos.

The famous Standish family had their home at Ellanbane, on the Island of Man. Here lived Rose and Barbara, the daughters of John Standish.

It was here that Rose married her cousin, Miles (or Myles) Standish, who came from Duxbury, a township a mile and a half south of Chorley, in Lancashire. Miles and Rose sailed in the

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*Mayflower*, and he became the first commissioned military officer in New England. Rose was the first of the Pilgrim "Fathers" to die in New England and was buried at Plymouth on February 8th, 1621. Subsequently Miles married her sister Barbara. He was sent to London on a most unpleasant mission to the British Government and remained in England, settling permanently in his home town. Not far from his home on Captain's Hill stands a stone monument, 110 feet high, with a bronze bust in commemoration of his life's work.

Another passenger in the *Mayflower* who achieved fame was Thomas Webster, a forefather of Daniel Webster, the American lawyer, orator and statesman. Thomas lived at Ormesby St. Michael a mile west of Ormesby in Norfolk. Many others from this parish went with him to America.

The son of another British emigrant gave his name to America's third oldest university, Yale University at New Haven, Connecticut. It was in 1717 that Elihu Yale, by his munificence, made possible the building of the young college, and the institution was given his name in token of gratitude. The Yales originally came from Plâs-yn-Jal (or Plâs-yn-Yale) twelve miles west of Wrexham, in Denbighshire, North Wales. David Yale married a widow from Wales, emigrating with her to New Haven in Connecticut in 1637. Elihu was born in Boston, Massachusetts, on April 5th, 1648, but when four years old was brought to England. At the age of 40 we hear of him being appointed Governor in the East India Company settlement at Fort St. George, Madras. He returned to London in 1699, a wealthy man, and worked at the Company's headquarters in Leadenhall Street. On July 8th, 1721, he died in London, at his residence in Queen Square, Bloomsbury, and was buried at Wrexham. On his grave we read :

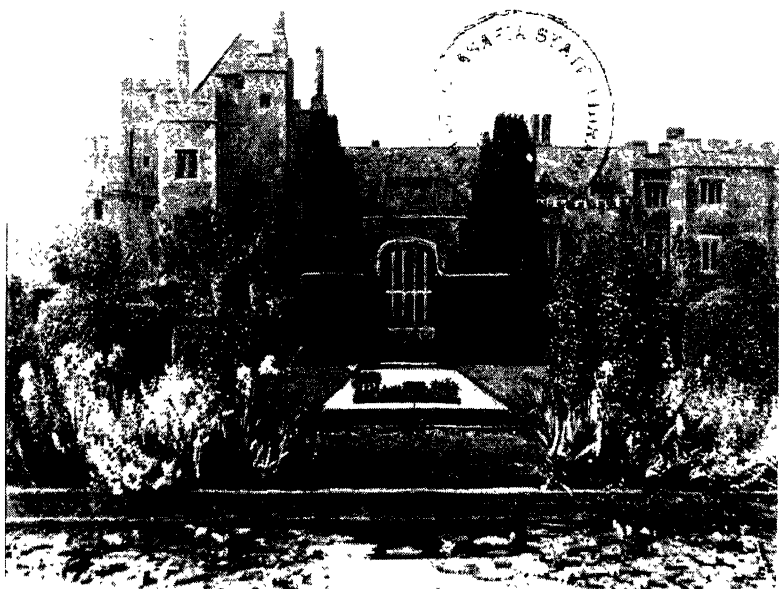
"Born in America, in Europe bred,  
In Africa travelled, in Asia wed,  
Where long he lived and thrived, in London dead.  
Much good, some ill he did, so hope all's even  
And that his soul through mercy's gone to heaven.  
You that survive and read this tale take care  
For this most certain exit to prepare,  
Where blest in peace, the actions of the just  
Smell sweet and blossom in their silent dust."

Yet even before the time of the Pilgrim Fathers, British citizens had made their way across the ocean to settle as permanent colonists in America. As early as the years 1606 and 1607 the good ships *Susan Constant*, *God Speed* and *Discovery* left Blackwell Pier, London, for Jamestown, Virginia.

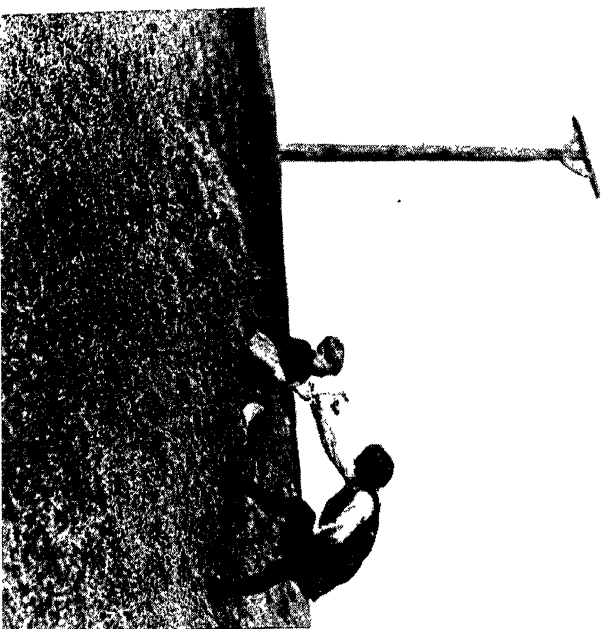
One of the leaders of this expedition was Captain John Smith,



XXXIII. THE HAUNTED HOUSE, SAMPFORD PEVERILL, DEVON



XXXIV. COMPTON WINYATES



XXXV. THE MURDER GIBBET, INKPEN BEACON



XXXVI. ONE OF THE "DEVIL'S QUOITS," STANTON  
HARCOURT

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who was immediately acclaimed President of the new colony. Smith was born at Willoughby near Alford in the woods of Lincolnshire, a parish in the Horncastle division. He went to school at Louth, in Lincolnshire, where, on the 250th anniversary of his birthday, General Baden-Powell, on behalf of the United States of America, unveiled a bust which bears the following inscription :

"We were born, not for ourselves, but to help others. Let us imitate the virtues of our predecessors to be worthily their successors."

In his youth Smith as page accompanied an English nobleman on a journey to the Continent, where he fought with the French against the Spaniards and later also saw service in the Netherlands. In the year 1600 he returned home, but was soon off again on a series of wild adventures in Turkey, Morocco and Syria. He returned to London, only to leave again finally for Virginia on December 19th, 1606. On one occasion President Smith was taken prisoner by the Indians and was given up for lost. He was saved by the appearance of a *dea ex machina* who secured his release and thus proved to be the good genius of the colony at its most critical time.

She was the Indian princess Pocahontas who subsequently married Smith's friend, John Rolfe, an Englishman. This was the first instance of an Indian woman marrying a white colonist. Later on Pocahontas travelled to England with Smith and was welcomed with great enthusiasm both at the court and by the populace. She was baptised and given the name of Lady Rebecca. In 1617, just when she was preparing to leave on a journey back to her homeland, she died and was buried in St. George's Church, Gravesend, Kent. Here two windows were dedicated to her memory.

In 1923 her ashes were to have been taken to Virginia, but when they came to look for it, her coffin was nowhere to be found; presumably it must have been removed by mistake when the church was restored in the year 1750.

A memorial tablet was set up on the site of her grave, with the inscription :

This

Stone Commemorates

PRINCESS POCAHONTAS or METOAKA

Daughter of

The Mighty American Indian Chief Powhattam.

Gentle and Humane, she was the friend of the earliest struggling English Colonists whom she nobly rescued, protected, and helped.

On her conversion to Christianity in 1613, she received in Baptism the name REBECCA, and shortly afterwards became

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the wife of THOMAS ROLFE, a settler in Virginia. She visited England with her husband in 1616, was graciously received by Queen Anne wife of James I. In the twenty-second year of her age she died at Gravesend, while preparing to revisit her native country, and was buried near this spot on March 21st, 1617.

"Lady Rebecca" became the ancestress of innumerable Americans. Among others, the second wife of President Wilson traced back her ancestry to the Princess, who also figures as the heroine of Ben Jonson's "*The Staple of News*."

If you wish to go more closely into the romantic history of these two early Virginians, there are two books which can be warmly recommended: "*John Smith—also Pocahontas*," by John Gould Fletcher, published by Brentano, New York, and "*Pocahontas, or the Nonpareil of Virginia*," by David Garnett, published by Chatto & Windus, London.

Captain Smith was buried in the Church of St. Sepulchre, Holborn Viaduct, London, and on his grave we may read:

"JOHN SMITH, sometime Governor of Virginia and Admiral of New England.

Here lies one conquer'd that hath conquer'd kings,  
Subdu'd large Territories, and done things  
Which to the World impossible would seeme,  
But that the truth is held in more esteeme.  
Shall I report his former service done,  
In honour of his God and Christendome?  
How that he did divide from Pagans three,  
Their Heads and Lives, Types of his Chivalry?  
For which great service in that Climate done  
Brave Sigmundus, King of Hungarion,  
Did give him, as a Coat of Arms to wear,  
These conquer'd heads, got by his Sword and Speare?  
Or shall I tell of his adventures since  
Done in Virginia, that large continence,  
How that he subdu'd kings unto his yoke,  
And made these Heathen flie, as wind doth smoke,  
And made their hand, being so large a Station,  
A habitation for our Christian Nation,  
Where God is glorified, their wants suppli'd,  
Which else for necessities must have di'd?"

The armour of Admiral Sir William Penn, father of the great William Penn, may be seen in the Church of St. Mary Redcliffe, Bristol. His father before him, Giles Penn, was a much respected



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merchant and sea-faring man in Bristol. The Admiral and his wife, Lady Margaret Penn, lived at Great Tower Hill, near the Tower of London. Here William the younger was born on October 14th, 1644, and christened nine days later in the Church of Allhallows, Barking-by-the-Tower, at the east end of Great Tower Street. And here a number of interesting relics of William Penn have been preserved.

The bronze tablet was put there in 1911 by the Pennsylvania Society of New York.

While his father was away at sea, young William and his mother lived at Wanstead, in Essex, and he attended a school at Chigwell. In the year 1672 he married young Gulielma Springett at King John's Farm, Chorley Wood, in Hertfordshire, between Rickmansworth and Amersham. They lived together at Warminghurst in Sussex, near Coolham, where the Quakers had their famous meeting place at the Blue Idol. Here, Gulielma died in the year 1694.

At Peckham, one of the south-eastern suburbs of London, at 180 Meeting House Lane, one may see the original meeting house where William Penn spoke before his arrest. There is also a tablet at the Central Criminal Court, at the Old Bailey, London, E.C.4, commemorating an attempt of his to address an unlawful assembly.

Penn lived in England, among other places at Basing House, Rickmansworth, in Hertfordshire.

In 1684, now a much respected statesman, Penn lived at Holland House, Kensington, London. In 1703 he set up house in Knightsbridge, near Hyde Park Corner, London, and in 1706 moved to the old market-town of Brentford, Middlesex, six miles from Hyde Park Corner.

But his last home was in the village of Field Ruscombe, one mile from Twyford in Berkshire; here he remained from 1710 until his death in 1718.

At Jordans, near Chalfont St. Giles in Buckinghamshire, near the famous Quakers' Meeting Place, are the graves of William Penn, his two wives, Gulielma Springett and Hannah Callowhill (whom he married in 1696) and his five children. The barn here was built with timbers from the *Mayflower*. Here too Gulielma's stepfather, Thomas Elwood, Milton's secretary, lies buried.

Four miles to the north-east of Jordans is the village of Penn, near Beaconsfield in Buckinghamshire. This is the seat of the Penn family, but it is by no means certain whether this family has any connection with that of the founder of Pennsylvania.

At Stoke Park, Stoke Poges, six miles south of Beaconsfield, near Windsor, Thomas Penn, the second son of William Penn, had his residence. Later on his son John also lived there. Here there is preserved a piece of the elm under which Penn concluded his famous treaty with the Indians. In the church a large space was

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set aside for the Penn family pew. Many records of this family are preserved in the Library of Salisbury Cathedral.

From the mass of English literature dealing with the Penns, the two following books may be specially recommended: "*Penn's Country*" by E. S. Roscoe, Longmans; and "*The Penns of Pennsylvania and England*" by Arthur Pound, the Macmillan Company, New York, 1932.

For four generations, the home of the Franklin family was at Ecton, five miles north-east of Northampton. The Franklins were farmers and blacksmiths, and many tombstones of members of the family have been located. But the farm house at Ecton which is shown to-day as the ancestral home of the Franklins is certainly not the genuine one.

Benjamin's father was Josias Franklin, who emigrated to New England with his wife and children in the year 1685. Twenty-four years later their youngest son, Benjamin, was born. When he was 18 he paid his first visit to England and stayed for a year and a half. During that time he worked in the printing press belonging to one Palmer, in St. Bartholomew's Close, London, E.C.1, which was then at the height of its prosperity; and later he worked at Wilde Court, W.C.2, printing newspapers. These lean years are most graphically described by Franklin himself in his autobiography.

When, years later, he came back to London as political envoy from Pennsylvania, he lived first at No. 7 and then at No. 16 Craven Street, W.C.2, where he is commemorated by a memorial tablet.

John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, and his brother Charles, the author of many hymns, were the sons of the Rev. Samuel Wesley, Rector of Epworth, a small market town in Lincolnshire, where both of them were born. Here too John Wesley's house, with the rooms in which he lived and died, may still be seen.

The two brothers found their way to America purely by chance. In the summer of 1735, General James Oglethorpe appeared in London in search of fresh blood for his colony in Georgia. What he was looking for was a group of energetic, pleasant and enthusiastic collaborators. Georgia was then regarded as a refuge for all the persecuted Protestant exiles from Europe, and as an ideal state for converted Indians. It was here that the first missionary society, the New Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, came into existence. Oglethorpe brought with him to England a very friendly Indian chieftain, and hoped that with his help he would be able to enlist suitable recruits for his Georgia. Somebody suggested young John Wesley to him, and they came to an understanding. At the last moment, Charles decided to join his brother. But it was not long before the two brothers, sadly disillusioned, returned to their home.

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When, in 1735, John fell seriously ill, through overwork, at Lewisham, he thought that his end was near and it was then that he composed his own epitaph, in order, as he himself explained, "to prevent vile panegyric." What he wrote was :

"Here lieth the body  
of John Wesley

A Brand plucked out of the Burning :  
Who died of a consumption in the fifty-first year of his age,  
Nor leaving, after his debts are paid,  
Ten pounds behind Him,  
Praying

God be merciful to me, an unprofitable servant ! "

Actually, however, he did not die until many years later (in 1791), and then he ordered that he should be buried between six poor men : "No hearse, no coach, no escutcheon, no pomp except the tears of them that loved me."

John Wesley was buried in the City Road Chapel, London, E.C.1. His epitaph reads :

To the Memory of  
THE VENERABLE JOHN WESLEY,  
Late Fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford.  
This GREAT LIGHT arose  
(By the singular Providence of God)  
To enlighten THESE NATIONS,  
And to revive, enforce, and defend,  
The Pure Apostolical DOCTRINES and PRACTICES of  
THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH :  
Which he continued to do, by his WRITINGS and his  
LABOURS  
For more than HALF A CENTURY  
And to his inexpressible Joy,  
Not only beheld their INFLUENCE extending,  
And their EFFICACY witnessed,  
In the Hearts and Lives of MANY THOUSANDS,  
As well in the WESTERN WORLD as in these KINGDOMS :  
But also, far above all human Power or Expectation,  
Lived to see PROVISION made by the singular GRACE of GOD  
For their CONTINUANCE AND ESTABLISHMENT  
TO THE JOY OF FUTURE GENERATIONS !  
READER, if thou art constrained to bless the INSTRUMENT  
GIVE GOD THE GLORY !  
After having languished a few days, he at length  
finished his COURSE and his LIFE together ;  
gloriously triumphing over DEATH, March 2.  
An. Dom. 1791, in the Eighty-eighth Year  
Of his Age.

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A monument stands in front of his grave and beside it are memorial tablets to his mother and his brother Charles. Another memorial with medallion portraits of John and Charles Wesley was placed in Westminster Abbey, London.

His mother Susannah Wesley (July 23rd, 1742) and her seventeen children lie buried in the London Nonconformist Cemetery, in Bunhill Row, not far from John Wesley's Chapel, where he preached his last sermon.

In the county of Durham, as far back as the twelfth century, the English family of De Wessington, Washington or Wassing is known to have lived. During the succeeding century they migrated to Westmorland and Lancashire. In the church at Bowness, on Windermere, there are the remains of a stained-glass window dating from the fourteenth century with the coat of arms of the Washingtons. The oldest coat of arms of Robert Washington has been traced to the end of the 15th century at Carnforth in Lancashire.

The earliest home of the Washington family, of which it is definitely known that the ancestors of the great statesman lived there, was Sulgrave, near Brackley, 16 miles north of Northampton, where they continued to live until the 17th century. In the church there is a grave with the following inscription :

“ Laurence Washington  
the ancestor of the  
first President of  
the United States  
a wool merchant  
twice Mayor of Northampton.”

On his monument he appears in Elizabethan costume—but without a head. The monument to his wife, son and daughter was stolen in 1889, but restored and replaced in 1924.

Washington Irving, in his published works, established the historical associations of these places and eventually, in 1914, on the occasion of the celebration of the completion of 100 years of unbroken friendship between England and America, a group of Old and New Englanders rearranged the house as a Washington Museum. Many relics were collected and placed there, including notably Gilbert Stuart's portrait of Washington, a saddle-bag which he had used in the Revolutionary War, letters, books, and so forth.

Jonathan Cape, the London publisher, has produced an excellent guide, “*Sulgrave Manor and the Washingtons, A history and guide to the Tudor home of George Washington's Ancestor*,” by H. Clifford-Smith.

## AMERICA IN BRITAIN

In 1610 the Washingtons moved from Sulgrave to Little Brington in Northamptonshire, some 15 miles further north.

Over the doorway of their house there stands the following quotation :

“The Lord giveth, the Lord taketh away,  
blessed be the name of the Lord.”

In the chancel of the church at Great Brington, in Northamptonshire, is the grave with the arms of the young Laurence Washington (d. 1616), “son and heire of Robert Washington of Sulgrave,” and Margaret (Butler), his wife.

This Laurence was the father of another Laurence. This second Laurence also had a son, and it was the latter who emigrated to Virginia and was the great-great-grandfather of the first President of the United States of America.

The arms of the Washington family may also be seen elsewhere on British soil : in All Saints' Church, Maidstone, Kent, and on a window in the church at Hengrave Hall, near Bury St. Edmunds. Five members of the family were buried at Garsdon, near Malmesbury in Wiltshire.

Washington's bronze statue was brought to London from the State of Virginia in 1921 and set up in St. Paul's Cathedral, a gift from the American people to the English. In the famous No. 10 Downing Street there now hangs a portrait of Washington by Charles Wilson Peale.

On British soil one still finds traces of the ancestors of Abraham Lincoln. In the Church of St. Mary at Coslany, at Norwich, there is a tombstone of one Thomas de Lincole, who lived about the year 1298. Most probably this was a forefather of the Lincoln family; but it is definitely known that the family, subsequent to this, lived at Hingham, a small market-town in Norfolk, on the road from Norwich to Brandon. It was from here that the English Lincolns set out for America, and their memory has been perpetuated in the Lincoln Hall, erected in their honour, which now serves as the local Club and Institute.

In the Church of St. Andrew at Hingham one may find the grave of Robert Lincoln, buried here in 1543. One of his American descendants in 1919 placed a bust of Abraham Lincoln in the north aisle of this church and beneath it the American Ambassador, John W. Davis, unveiled a tablet bearing the inscription :

“In this parish for many generations lived the Lincolns, ancestors of the American Abraham Lincoln. To him, greatest of that lineage, many citizens of the United States have erected this memorial, in the hope that for all ages between that land and

## 1,000 CURIOSITIES OF BRITAIN

this land and all lands, there shall be 'malice towards none, with charity for all.'"

In the year 1911, American admirers of the "Sixteenth President of the United States" set up a huge natural block of granite in his honour in front of the entrance to this church.

It was not far from here that Robert Perk once lived, and worked as rector of the parish. In the year 1636 he overturned the altar and kicked aside the lectern; then, hounded out of his living by the authorities, he fled with a number of followers to New England, where he founded a city and a colony which he named Hingham. After ten years of voluntary exile he returned to his home town and was reinstated in his former post as rector.

Friends of America in Britain should not fail to visit the city of Dunfermline, 16 miles north-west of Edinburgh, in Fife, Scotland. They will no doubt be forgiven for showing less interest in the fact that Queen Margaret and King Robert the Bruce were buried in the Abbey here than in the associations of the town with Andrew Carnegie. As a lad of 12 years old, Andrew emigrated to Pittsburg with his mother and father, whose livelihood as a hand-weaver had been completely ruined by the newly established rapidly developing trade in factory-woven goods. His parents both came from old-established Dunfermline families and he himself, after a sensational career in which he rose from peddling old clothes by the roadside, by way of telegraph boy and telegraphist to directing the first sleeping-car company, eventually became king of the newly founded steel industry.

At the very height of his activity he retired and devoted the whole of his energy to philanthropic activities. In America and Great Britain he established a series of million-pound endowments for the advancement of science and of peace, and also founded numerous public libraries in gratitude for the enjoyment which he, as a poor telegraph boy, derived from his use of the first free library in Pennsylvania. He died in the year 1918.

The room in which he was born, at 2, Moiric Street, Dunfermline, has been made into a "Birthplace Museum" and contains many relics of his life of benefactions. One of the first things which he did with his freshly accumulated wealth was to endow his native city with 2½ million dollars' worth of five per cent. bonds. This represented a yearly income of 25,000 dollars. Next he bought Pittencrieff Park and Glen, just outside the city, paying the—for that time—grossly exorbitant price of 45,000 dollars, and subsequently laying it out to provide some of the most beautiful gardens in the world, and presenting it to his fellow-Scotsmen, "to bring sweetness and light into the lives of the toiling masses and give them, especially the young, some charm, some happiness,

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some elevating conditions of life which residence elsewhere would have denied."

In the year 1911, he gave a further £25,000 to the city and founded a school for Hygiene, for Physical Culture, for Gymnastics, Music, Arts and Crafts; a Women's Institute, Baths, Horticultural Exhibition Gardens, etc., etc.

For himself and his family he bought Skibo Castle, half a mile from Dornoch, in Sutherlandshire, Scotland. Dornoch lies to the north of Dornoch Firth, on the south-east coast of Scotland. In the year 1628 it served as a royal castle for Charles I and now enjoys a great reputation as having the most beautiful golf course in the whole world. In the neighbouring Dunrobbin Castle golf balls are still preserved which belonged to the young Earls of Sutherland who were educated here in the 17th century. In Dornoch Carnegie endowed one of his many free libraries.

In the 18th century Skibo Castle was the seat of the Bishops of Sutherland and Caithness and was subsequently converted into a fortress.

In the year 1650, the Marquess of Montrose spent two nights here as a prisoner after his defeat by the Presbyterian army near Bonar Bridge. Gradually the castle fell into decay until in 1900 the ruins were completely demolished and a new castle built on the site for Carnegie and his wife, an American, and daughter. Here he lived for the best part of 50 years and it was from here that he poured out his golden stream of benefactions to humanity and also suffered the most grievous disappointment of his earthly existence—the World War. As is well known, as part of his passionately devoted work for peace, Carnegie defrayed the cost of building the Hague Palace of Peace.

His love of his native city was a constant incentive to further gifts to its inhabitants. "What Benares is for the Hindu, Mecca for the Mohammedan, and Jerusalem for the Christian, all that and more too is Dunfermline to me" was his repeated pretext.

In Pittencrieff Park there is a statue to Andrew Carnegie, erected to him by his justifiably grateful compatriots.

Mrs. Carnegie gave £8,000 to the British Government for the purpose of erecting a memorial in Dunfermline near to her husband's birth-place. The Carnegie Central Public Library, in Abbot Street, numbers 30,000 volumes and possesses, amongst other treasures, the finest collection of the works of Robert Burns.

Another multi-millionaire of this fabulous epoch of American prosperity round about 1900 had a castle on English soil: William Waldorf Astor.

In 1890, with his wife, he came to settle in London—incidentally for the same reason as more recently drove his fellow-countryman,

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Lindbergh, from the United States—the fear that his children would be kidnapped by lurking blackmailers. Here he bought up the "*Pall Mall Gazette*" and "*The Budget*" and converted these Liberal papers into Conservative organs; later on he also took over the "*Observer*" and at the outbreak of the war gave it to his son, Major Waldorf Astor; but the latter soon disposed of this legacy.

Astor, who acquired British nationality, bought, among other things, the famous Ann Boleyn Castle at Hever, in Kent, the most interesting example of domestic architecture of the 15th and 16th centuries which has come down to our own time. Hever is situated on the western edge of the Weald of Kent, half way between Chiddingstone and Edenbridge. In the Church of St. Peter may be seen a marble altar tomb, with a bronze effigy of Sir Thomas Bullen, or Boleyn, K.G., Earl of Wiltshire and Ormond, who died here in 1538 and was the father of Queen Ann Boleyn.

By way of coincidence one may mention here that for the preceding two centuries the neighbourhood of Hever Castle had been the seat of the Waldo family—a curious coincidence since the place from which the ancestors of the Astor family emigrated at the beginning of the 18th century was Waldorf, in what was then the German Grand Duchy of Baden.

Astor spent two million pounds on converting Hever Castle into one of the most costly and luxurious palaces in the world. He was elevated to the Peerage as Baron Astor of Hever Castle, and finally created Viscount.

Shortly before his death in August, 1919, he transferred the whole of his fortune—some 80 million dollars, which he had brought over with him to the country of his adoption, to an American trust for the benefit of his sons, Major Astor and Captain J. J. Astor. The sumptuous castle is to-day the seat of his son John Jacob Astor, M.P., J.P.

There are a number of exhaustive works on this subject, notably the book, "*American Shrines on English Soil*," by J. F. Muirhead, published by The Dorland Agency Ltd., Dorland House, London; "*American Shrines in England*," by Alfred T. Story, published by Methuen & Co., London; "*English Ancestral Homes of Noted Americans*," by Anne Hollingsworth Wharton, published by the J.B. Lipincott Company, Philadelphia and London; and finally, "*Americans in England*," by R. R. Mowat, published by George G. Harrap & Co. Ltd., London.

For those who would like to read an amusing and careful account of the connections between cities with the same names in Old and New England, I can recommend the two volumes of "*Towns of New England and Old England, Ireland and Scotland*," a work produced by the State Street Trust Company of Boston,



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Massachusetts in 1920 on the occasion of the tercentenary celebrations of the landing of the Pilgrim Fathers. And finally one must mention the beautiful edition de luxe of "*The American Pilgrim's Way in England to Homes and Memorials of the Founders of Virginia, the New England States and Pennsylvania, the Universities of Harvard and Yale and other Illustrious Americans*," by Marcus B. Huish, published by the Fine Art Society, London.

## CHAPTER VII

### ECCLESIASTICAL CURIOSITIES

THE oldest church in Britain, and probably in the whole of Europe, is the little Church of St. Martin at Canterbury: the nave measures 30 feet by 25, and the chancel 40 feet by 14. In itself and its associations it may also lay claim to being the most interesting church in Great Britain. The tower dates from the 14th century, whilst the organ chamber and vestry are quite modern, but the rest of the building is much as it was in the time when St. Augustine arrived in England.

Thus, part of the building has been in continuous use for over 13 centuries.

The oldest Abbey-church is that of St. Mary at Minster-on-Sea, in Kent, having been founded in the year 670.

Amongst the oldest churches in Britain must also be included All Saints' Church, at Brixworth, in Northamptonshire, between Northampton and Market Harborough. The fabric is a mixture of stone and Roman bricks and it is said to have been built in the year 680, by Saxons. But the style is not uniform, and some of it must have been added later.

The only extant example of a purely Saxon church is that of St. Lawrence, at Bradford-on-Avon, in Wiltshire, and this may be regarded as one of the most remarkable of the relics which have been preserved from that age. It was discovered by the merest chance by the Rev. Canon William Henry Rich-Jones in the year 1858. Looking out over the town from a point of vantage on Tory Rank, he noticed below him three roofs whose character unmistakably betrayed the presence there of a very old building. To his expert eye it was obvious that here must be an ancient church, for he distinctly made out the form of chancel, nave and porch. Thus what was then a dwelling-house was found to be an erstwhile church. Painstaking and expert work restored to the building its former character, and now, during the summer months, divine service is regularly held in this rare sacred edifice.

In his book, "*English Towns and Districts*," Edward A. Freeman describes the structure as the only complete example of this type of church in Europe. It is, he says, "the most ancient unaltered church in England showing the singular analogy between the earlier and the later imitations of Roman architecture. It is in fact the one perfect surviving Old-English church in the land. The

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ground-plan is absolutely untouched and there are no mediaeval insertions at all. So perfect a specimen of Primitive Romanesque is certainly unique in England; we should not be surprised if it is unique of its own kind in Europe."

The most interesting Saxon monument inside a church which has come down unchanged to our own day, is to be found in the church at Wixworth, in Derbyshire. It is an early Christian coped tomb and stands against the wall in the north aisle. It is comparatively small, measures only five feet by two feet ten inches, and marks the last resting place of the founder of the earliest church built on the site in the seventh century.

The oldest Renaissance monument in England is a statue in the Church of St. Mary, at Tickhill, seven miles south of Doncaster, on the borders of Nottinghamshire and the West Riding of Yorkshire.

The little village of Ilam, in Staffordshire, two and a half miles north-west of Thorpe Cloud, boasts the oldest Norman font in England dating from the 11th century. It may be seen in the Church of the Holy Cross there.

The earliest example in Britain of what is termed "Palladian-architecture" is to be found in the magnificent park of Staunton Harold, near Worthington in Leicestershire, the seat of the Earl Ferrers: it is the private chapel which adjoins the stately mansion.

One of the noblest examples of Gothic ecclesiastical architecture is the Chapter House of St. Mary Southwell Minster in Nottinghamshire. Among its most noteworthy features are the windows and the choir screen, which has been described as being quite the loveliest in England.

Hodgson says of this building: "Other churches may be older, a few may be larger, but none are more beautiful. It is among chapter houses as the rose amongst the flowers, absolutely unrivalled, the best work ever accomplished by carvers in stone."

The most beautiful village church is perhaps that which is to be found in the market town of Melton Mowbray in Leicestershire, on the road from London to Leeds. So this town has other claims to fame than its pork pies and Stilton cheese. The loveliest village church is that of St. Mary in the magnificent Park at Sledmere, on the road from Malton to Driffield in the East Riding of Yorkshire. It has a 14th century tower, whilst the nave and chancel represent the Classic style of the 18th century. But the structure as a whole has been so restored as to produce a stately edifice in the Gothic style, consisting of chancel, vestry, nave, aisles and south porch, alongside the old tower at the western end.

There are a great many churches which compete for the title of smallest church in Britain; among them we may mention the following five:

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A church—name unknown—at Lullington, three and a half miles north-east of Seaford in Sussex. It is only about 16 feet square (i.e., has an area of 256 feet) and is built of flint. Actually it is the chancel of a larger church which formerly stood on this site. It has a seating capacity of only 20: incidentally, Lullington consists of only six households.

The Church of St. Lawrence, Ventnor, on the Isle of Wight. It measures 25 feet by 11 feet (i.e., 275 square feet in area), and is the best preserved of all these "smallest" churches.

St. Piran's Church, in Cornwall: 25 feet by 12½ feet, or 312½ square feet in area.

The Church of St. Culbone, near Porlock, on the coast of the British channel, West Somerset: 33 feet by 12 feet, or 396 square feet in area.

Wythburn Church in the Lake District: 22 feet by 44 feet, or 968 square feet in area.

Smaller even than the above is Upleatham Church, in Yorkshire, measuring 17¾ feet by 13 feet, or 240¾ square feet. But this is only a portion of the church which originally stood here.

The smallest of London's churches is St. Ethelburga's in Bishopsgate. The business premises on either side have so encroached on it that its facade has almost been squeezed out of existence, and it is easy to miss this building as one passes.

The smallest cathedral city in England is Wells, in Somerset. Incidentally, Wells is the only city of its rank which has not lent its name to an ennobled family.

The largest parish church in Britain is St. Nicholas Church at Yarmouth, Norfolk. This is a large cruciform building covering an area of 23,265 square feet. It has room for 3,500 persons.

Of the first Premonstratensian nunnery in England only a few stones remain as a memorial, at Broadholme, in Nottinghamshire. This order was introduced into England in 1140 by Agnes de Camville, wife of Peter de Gousla, and the convent at Broadholme was established in the same year. There was another house belonging to this order at Ilford, in Lincolnshire.

One of the most striking and also earliest examples of a hermit's retreat in Britain is to be found near Knaresborough, 18 miles north of Leeds in the West Riding of Yorkshire. It was hewn out of the solid rock on the left bank of the river Nidd, about half a mile below Knaresborough Castle, and consists of several chambers. Of these one, known as St. Robert's Chapel, is particularly interesting. It has a window and an altar, and its bleak severity was relieved by rather amateurish carvings. These are said to have been the handiwork of Saint Robert the Hermit, who died in 1218. Another artificial cave further down the river

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is more often regarded as his special retreat, though also known as Giles' or Eugene Aram's Cave, as well as St. Robert's.

In front of this cell were found indications that a chapel once stood here, and this has been identified as the Chapel of the Holy Cross, built for the Hermit by his brother, the Mayor of York. This same cave was the scene of the murder of Daniel Clark by Eugene Aram, in 1745, a crime which was not detected until 13 years later, when the body was brought to light.

The first home of the Carmelite or White Friars in England was at Aylesford, in Kent, and may still be seen. The most complete example in England of a Friary of this Order is that at Hulne Park, on the Alne, two miles north-west of Alnwick, in Northumberland. But even this is now in ruins, and very picturesque ruins they are, with the unusually long and narrow church, of which the most curious feature is a strange recess with an oven, evidently for baking the altar-bread.

But for beauty and interest as the ruins of a great monastic house, one should visit Fountains Abbey, three miles south-west of Ripon in the West Riding of Yorkshire. This great institution was founded in the year 1132 by Archbishop Thurston of York.

There are five churches in England which are known to possess a curious old musical instrument known as a long trumpet. These churches are :

1. SS. Peter and Paul Church, at Charing, five and a half miles north-west of Ashford, in East Kent.
2. Brabrook Church, in Northumberland.
3. Harrington Church, in Northumberland.
4. Willaughton Church, in Lincolnshire, and
5. St. Mary's Church, at East Lake, in Nottinghamshire.

In the last-named, this instrument, which is the finest of the five, is known as the "Shawn" and is made out of tin. It is 200 years old. When extended, it measures  $7\frac{3}{4}$  feet in length and when closed,  $4\frac{3}{4}$  feet. Until the year 1855 it was actually used in the church by the bass singers.

Four churches have acoustic jars, viz :

1. St. Peter's Church, Mancroft, Norwich, in Norfolk.
2. Denford Church in Northamptonshire.
3. St. Olave's Church, Chichester, in Sussex, and
4. St. Clement's Church, Sandwich, in Kent.

What must be one of the oldest "telephones" in Europe is to be found in Worcester Cathedral: it appears to date from Norman times. In one of the rooms is an opening in the wall through which it is possible to speak to the Chapter House and the Church

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Transept. It is believed that some sort of a church functionary used to sit here during services and give various instructions through this aperture. Another mediaeval telephone may be seen at Castle Rushen, on the Isle of Man; it connected the four storied ward tower with the tower of the fortress.

From time immemorial, the stoup for holy water in the ruined church in the village of Llanidan, four miles north of Carnarvon, in Anglesey, has always filled itself afresh with water. The obvious explanation was that the water found its way through the thickly ivy-mantled roof, but since, recently, the ivy was cut away and the roof pointed, the priest has still continued to find the water replenishing itself. And the riddle is still unsolved.

The tower of St. Edith's Church, at Tamworth, seven miles south-east of Lichfield in Staffordshire—1,100 years ago a royal residence—is unique in Britain in having two staircases. A person going up one staircase is not able to see anyone going down the other. The purpose of this double staircase has never been explained.

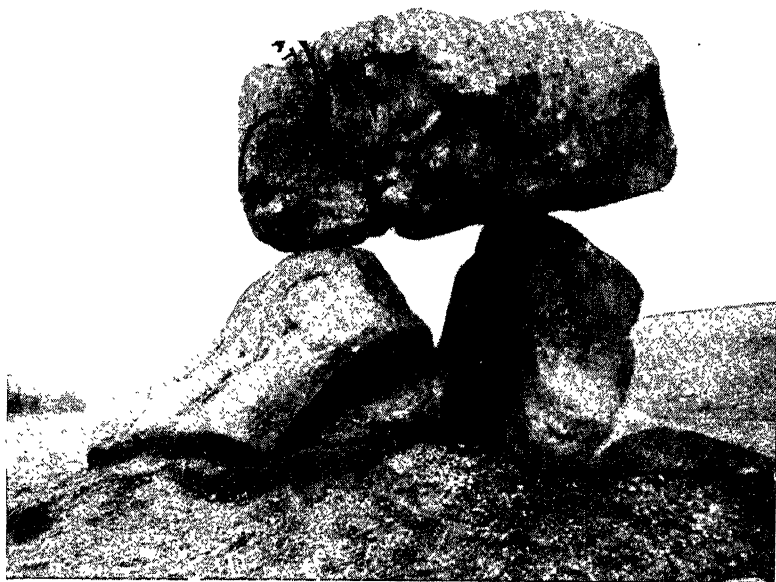
The only extant pre-Reformation Catholic Church in Britain is Ely Chapel, in Ely Place, London, E.C.1.

The first post-Reformation Catholic Church in Britain is St. Mary's Roman Church, East Lulworth, four miles south-east of Wool, in Dorset. Its erection was specially sanctioned by George III and the work was carried out by Thomas Weld with the assistance of expert church-builders, imported for the purpose from Rome. It is a circular edifice of stone, built on the Italian plan, and in it the first Roman Catholic Bishop of America, Archbishop Carroll of Baltimore, was consecrated in the year 1794.

The oldest wooden pulpits which are still in use to-day date from the 14th century. One of these is to be found in the Church of St. Thomas, at Mellor, three miles north-west of Blackburn, in Lancashire. Another is to be seen at Fulbourn, a village five miles E.S.E. of Cambridge; it is of carved oak—quaint little figures forming a striking feature of the design—and bears the date 1360. The third example, made about the same time, is to be seen at Lutterworth, in Leicestershire. From it William Wycliff, whose fame was to spread far beyond this parish, used to preach during his rectorship there which covered the period 1375 to 1378.

The earliest Jacobean pulpit is to be found in the picturesque little village of Sopley, which lies on the east bank of the Hampshire River Avon. It now forms a much-admired feature of St. Michael's Church. Earl Barton and Alford in Lincolnshire also possess pulpits dating from this same period, i.e. 1606.

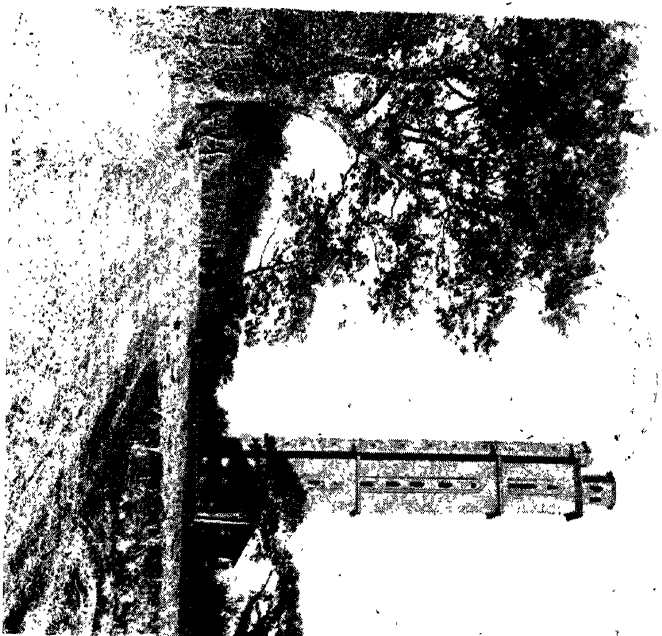
"The chef d'oeuvre of English woodwork, wonderful alike in design and execution," is to be seen in the chancel of St. Mary's Parish Church, in Lancaster. This part of the church is divided



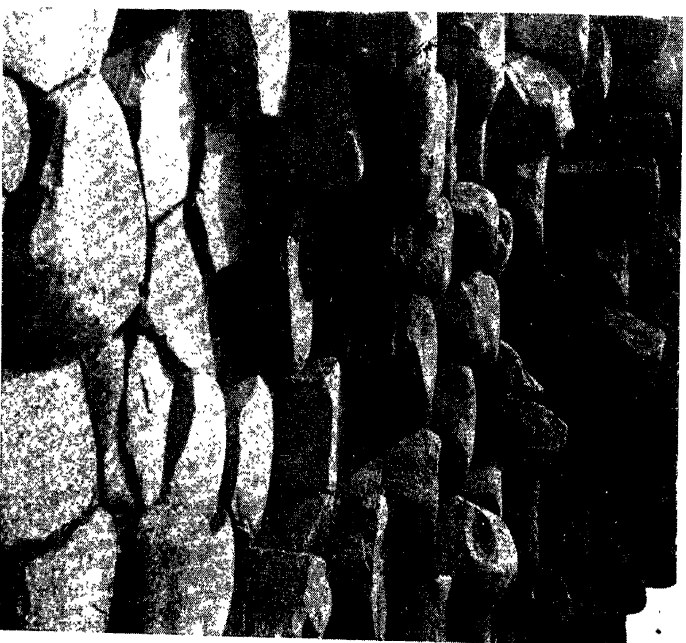
XXXVII. THE DEVIL'S DEN, NEAR MARLBOROUGH, WILTS



XXXVIII. THE HISTORIC ANVIL IN GRETNA GREEN SMITHY, WHERE MANY MARRIAGES HAVE BEEN SOLEMNIZED



XXXIX. PETERSON'S FOLLY, SWAY, HANTS



XL. THE 'WISHING CHAIR,' GIANTS' CAUSEWAY,  
CO. ANTRIM



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from the rest by a three-fold screen, with one large central arch flanked by two smaller ones. The 14 stalls, with their high canopies, are richly ornamented with delicate carvings.

The curious church at Berwick-on-Tweed, has in it a heavy oak pulpit, said to have been removed from an older church in which Knox preached for a time. But there is another pulpit which has even closer associations with the Scottish church reformer; it is the old pulpit from St. Giles', Edinburgh, which may now be seen in the Museum of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland.

A pulpit from which only one sermon a year is preached is the old stone pulpit of St. John the Baptist, in Magdalen College, Oxford. A curious custom connected with the College Chapel is the singing of the May Song. Every year on May 1st, at sunrise, the choir climbs to the top of the tower where they chant the Latin hymn "*Te Deum Patrem Colimus.*" Every Christmas Eve the first part of the "*Messiah*," as well as a selection of carols, is sung in the College Hall.

In the village of Compton, two miles north-west of Godalming, in Surrey, is the quaint little church of St. Nicholas. It is unique in Britain in having a double chancel, or rather two chancels, one over the other. Originally a little Saxon church stood on this site, and the tower and part of the nave walls of this early structure can still be seen. The Normans enlarged this church by adding two aisles, and erecting an upper chapel or chancel over the sanctuary at the east end of the earlier church. Other unique features are a Norman anchorite's cell and the remains of a Saxon cell on the north side of the chancel. A piece of stained glass dating from 1175 portraying the "*Madonna and Child*," and a screen in the upper chapel dating from 1180, are the oldest of its kind in Britain, and are two other treasures of this little church. The Norman pillars and arches of the nave were built with clunch chalk.

The Church of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, at the north-east corner of Trafalgar Square, London, contains the graves of Nell Gwynne and Thomas Chippendale, among others. In addition to its more usual functions, this house of worship provides shelter for the homeless at night—and hot coffee to fortify them in the morning.

St. Peter's Church at Bradhurst, near Rainham, in Kent, possesses a copper gilt paten which has been in use since the year 1120—the oldest still serving.

Under the tower of the village church at Norton St. Philip, near Midford, half way between Bath and Frome, in Somerset, is a tablet to the memory of a local "*freak*." It refers to two ladies of Foxcote, who appear to have been Siamese twins.

One of the finest brasses in Britain is to be found in a simple country church. It is the tomb of Oswald Dykes who was buried

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in the village church at Wensley, a mile and a half south-west of Leyburn in Yorkshire.

Another curious monument, likewise in the North Riding of Yorkshire, is the Bruce cenotaph in the Church of St. Nicholas, at Guisborough. It is a very valuable work of art and unique in Europe. The top slab, which measures 9 feet by 33 feet, was for a long time used as a communion table. Its date is uncertain, but from an impression of a seal showing a cock on a hand-reel—interpreted as the rebus of the Prior Cockerell—it is ascribed to the period 1519—34.

Another rebus—or name-picture—may be seen in the Church of St. Bartholomew, near Smithfield, in London. In an oriel let into the Norman gallery, or triforium, is a window known as “Bolton’s Window,” ascribed to the Prior William Bolton (1509—1532). Here one sees: “*A bolt through a tun.*”

A similar device may be seen in the quaint little parish church of St. Peter, at Rowlstone, a mile and a half west of Pontifras, in Herefordshire. Here there are two curious candle-brackets of wrought iron work; below the spike is seen the same cock’s figure as was mentioned above, associated in this case with a fleur-de-lys. The candelabra is said to date from pre-Reformation times.

There is an old wooden effigy in the parish church of St. Andrew at Bishop Auckland, in Durham, showing a knight in a suit of chain mail. He lies cross-legged, with his feet resting on an animal, presumably a boar. For this monument is said to have been set up in memory of a member of the Pollard family who killed a wild boar which had seriously ravaged the countryside. The King had promised a “princely guerdon” to whomsoever should bring him the head of this pernicious beast, so this young scion of the Pollard family armed himself and, mounting his horse, rode off to track the beast to its lair. Here he climbed into a neighbouring tree and waited for a convenient moment to strike at his quarry. Eventually he killed the beast and cut out his tongue. Great festivities followed, and the whole family were fêted. The hero of the exploit received a piece of land and, after his death, the famous wooden effigy for a tombstone.

In many British churches hearts have been buried. Particularly those who went on the Crusades and died in foreign lands left instructions that their hearts were to be sent home for burial in their native soil. Among the most famous of the hearts which are buried in English churches are those of Anne Boleyn and Thomas Hardy.

But there are two English churches which claim the distinction of harbouring Anne Boleyn’s heart. In All Saints’ Church, East Horndon, four miles south-west of Billericay in South Essex, there is an altar-tomb in the wall of the south transept, in which, it is

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claimed, the Queen's heart has been preserved since 1536. The other contestant for the honour is the Church of SS. Andrew and Patrick in Elveden Park, four miles south-west of Thetford, in north-west Suffolk. In 1836 her heart was found here in the south wall. Just previous to this date the rector had been told actually by an old parish clerk, whose forefathers had, for 200 years, cherished this secret and handed it down from generation to generation, that the unhappy Queen's heart had found its last resting place in his church. It was then re-buried under the organ.

A mile and a half from Dorchester, in Dorset, the river Frome may be found as it winds its way through the enchantingly lovely countryside. Here too is the little old church of St. Michael Stinsford in which there is a window in memory of Thomas Hardy (died January 11th, 1928), who lived in this parish. His heart lies buried in the quiet little churchyard here, but his ashes were given a place of honour in the Poet's Corner of Westminster Abbey in the heart of London.

There are many, many remarkable graves in British churches, and it must suffice here to mention only the most curious of these.

In the crypt of St. Michan's Church, in Dublin, the corpses of some Irishmen from the 16th century may be seen lying in open coffins. They do not appear to have been embalmed, nor were the intestines removed, and yet, to the deep mystification of scientists, the bodies have remained unchanged all these years.

The door of the Benedictine Treasury at Tewkesbury Abbey, in Gloucestershire, is covered with hammered armour. This armour was taken from the corpses of the knights who met with their death here in 1417, in the battle between the Lancastrians and the Yorkists. Monks stripped the mail from the bodies and hung it on the door.

There are no less than six churches in Britain with doors covered with—gruesome as it may seem—human hide. Microscopic examination at the hands of experts has left no doubt that the material actually is human hide. The six churches are those of Hadstock, Copford and Castle Hedingham, in Essex, the Cathedrals of Rochester and Winchester and Westminster Abbey.

There are four round churches in England copied from the Church of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem. The most famous of such is Temple Church, London, and the next best known is the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, Northampton.

The latter was erected in 1099 as a thank offering for his safe return from the first crusade by Simon of Senlis, the first Norman Earl of Northampton. In the chancel is a window set up by the 5th Battalion of the Northamptonshire Regiment in memory of Godfrey de Bouillon, leader of the First Crusade and Conqueror

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of Jerusalem, and to Richard Coeur de Lion, who spent the first Easter after his release from captivity at Northampton.

Worcester Cathedral contains the oldest picture of an English sovereign which still exists. This, of course, is the church where King Henry II and Queen Eleanor were crowned in 1158. It was, as is well known, burnt down in 1202 and subsequently rebuilt, the restored Cathedral being visited by King John in 1207, when he came to pray at the tomb of Wulfstan. After his death in 1216 at Newark, he was buried, at his own wish, in this cathedral in front of the high altar, where his portrait now hangs.

The largest and probably also the most valuable east window in any church in the whole world is that in the Cathedral Church of the Holy and Undivided Trinity, at Carlisle. It is a wonderful masterpiece and quite unique. Rickman describes it as "by far the most free and brilliant example of decorated tracery in the kingdom."

The lower part of the window, which is modern, contains 263 circles and is divided into nine portions by eight mullions, of which the central pair are thicker than the others. But the upper part of the window is much older, dating back to the late 14th century. In it a number of scenes are depicted, but these bear a close relationship with each other, so as to make the whole a composite representation of what is known as a "Doom," portraying the Resurrection, Christ seated on his throne of judgment, etc.

There is only one other east window in Britain which is at all comparable to the magnificent one at Carlisle, and that is to be found in the Cathedral Church of St. Peter, at York.

It is not as large as the Carlisle window, but nevertheless is quite as impressive. It measures 75 feet in height, is 32 feet broad and is also divided into nine lights. It is composed of 117 small panels, each about a yard square, portraying in exquisite workmanship scenes from the Bible, ranging from those showing the creation to others depicting the apocalypse.

This work was executed by John Thornton, of Coventry, a celebrated artist in glass. He was an Englishman, but followed the Italian school and started this piece of work in 1402. His salary was at the rate of four shillings a day, though every New Year's Day he received—as a sort of encouragement—a bonus of five pounds and at the completion of his work to the satisfaction of those who commissioned it, a further premium of ten pounds. The masterpiece took three years to complete.

York Minster contains another very arresting stained glass window, in the north transept. It is known as "the five sisters." This city was formerly a favoured resort of single ladies, and it was in memory of five of these that the window was presented and dedicated. It is said that each of the panels was first carried

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out in needlework by one of the ladies, and the artist who made the window—a foreign craftsman—then copied their design on glass. But the date and circumstances of this are otherwise unknown.

It is known that this window is the most exquisite example of late 13th century painted glass. It consists of five portions, equal in size, and remarkable for the peculiar blending of the colours, such as is found nowhere else in England. It fills the whole space at the end of the central aisle in the north transept, the part of the Cathedral which is said to have been built, in the reign of Henry III by John Romanus the Older.

For those who are particularly interested in beautiful church windows there are other remarkable examples of the glass-painter's art to be found in Britain.

The following churches may be specially mentioned :

The Church of Selly, in Shropshire.

The Church of St. Andrew, at Heckington, on the road from Sleaford to Boston, in Lincolnshire.

St. Mary's Church, Fairford, 24 miles E.S.E. of Gloucester, which contains 28 exquisite stained glass windows dating from the early 16th century, unique in being at once wonderfully beautiful, and so many in one building.

The Cathedral Church of St. Peter, at Gloucester, contains a vast window, measuring 72 feet by 38 feet, being one of the largest of its kind and filling the whole wall at one end of the building. A remarkable feature of this window is the fact that, in order to give the largest possible space to it, it has been set in in three different planes.

The Church of St. Simon, at Simonburn, nine miles north of Hexham in Northumberland. It has a notable window belonging to the 13th century, divided into two main portions.

A fragment of old Roman glass has been included in the modern window in the north aisle of Hexham Church, Northumberland. This is quite unique throughout Britain.

One of the oldest spires in Britain is that belonging to the Church of St. Thomas à Becket, in Clapham, two miles north-west of Bedford, on the north bank of the river Ouse. The tower is 82 feet in height and is regarded as a Saxon structure dating from the 10th century.

The oldest portion of the octagonal spire of the stately St. Mary's Church at South Semercotes, near Saltfleetby, in Lincolnshire, must be numbered among the oldest spires which are still standing. It was formerly 85 feet high and dates from the 13th century. But a later portion has been superimposed, so that the present-day spire is 162 feet high.

There are a number of fortified church towers to be found in England.

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At Melsonby, a village five and a half miles north-west of Richmond in North Riding, Yorkshire, there is a church—that of St. James the Great—which has a “Norman keep, in miniature.” Built into the tower is a square opening through which troops could be admitted: it also served, to judge from traces which can be seen, as a means of supplying food to a recluse who had his habitation there.

At Middleham, a town between Ripon and Hawes, on the south bank of the river Ure, likewise in Yorkshire, one finds the Church of SS. Mary and Skelda, which has a similar tower. It was in this tower that the Rev. Luke Cotes who acted as Dean from 1718—1741 was incarcerated when he became involved in financial difficulties, after having spent money on repairing the church and being unable to collect it from his flock.

Built into the tower there is also a fireplace, evidently constructed in comparatively modern times out of early English tombstones.

Another fortified tower is to be found at Bental in Derbyshire. This was formerly a place of refuge, and a strategical point of defence for those who fled before the incursions of the Scots. At the foot of the staircase in the tower there is a portcullis.

At Burgh-on-the-Sands, in Cumberland, there is another such tower. It was fortified after the death of Edward I (July 7th, 1307) during the fighting with the Scots. At the same time, the Church of Annan, on the Scottish side of the Solway, was also converted into a veritable fortress.

At Great Salkeld, in Cumberland also, one finds the fortified tower of St. Cuthbert's Church, which has only one door to the Church, strengthened with heavy forged iron. When this way of entry is barred, it is impossible to gain access either to the church or to the tower.

At Newton Arlosh, a few miles west of Burgh on the coast of Cumberland, in the year 1309, the Abbot of Holme established a fortress in St. John's Church, so as to be prepared for the inroads of the Scots. The entrance to this stronghold is only two feet seven inches wide. The windows are all seven feet above the ground level and one foot wide and a fireplace is also to be seen inside the fortified tower.

It is not to be wondered at that there are many contestants for the title of oldest among the church bells of Britain.

It appears that the authentic claimant is to be found in the Church of SS. Peter and Paul in the village of Chaldon, two miles north-east of Merstham in Surrey. The church itself was built in 1100, and the bell in question is said to have pealed there ever since the year 1190. Incidentally, this bell is now not in the belfry, but in the porch. The champions of its antiquity even claim that it is the oldest bell in the whole of Europe.

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A very close contestant for this title is the bell of the Church of St. Deny's at Chilworth, on the road from Romsey to Southampton, in Hampshire. However that may be, this bell was cast in the 12th century; the exact year is not known, but the people of the locality proudly show theirs as the oldest of Britain's churchbells.

The next rival is the bell in the village of Scawton, six miles north-east of Coxwold in the North Riding of Yorkshire. The Church of St. Mary here is an authentic Norman structure built in 1146, and its bell is said to have been in action in the year 1190, perhaps even earlier—or perhaps later!

The oldest bells which have their date of origin clearly marked on them are to be found hanging in the Church of St. Chad at Claughton, near Lancaster; the figure is 1296. This church was built in 1815 on the site previously occupied by one which had stood there since the 11th century. The next oldest dated bell is at Cold Ashby, in Northamptonshire, marked 1317.

The oldest bell bearing the iron founder's name dates from the year 1282 and still rings in the Church of West Challow, two and a half miles north-west of Wantage, in Berkshire. This was cast by Paul the Potter. A second bell, of about the same age, similarly "signed," is to be found at Goring, that delightful Thames-side village 10 miles north-west of Reading in Oxfordshire.

But the king of all church bells in the whole of Britain hangs in St. Paul's Cathedral, London. It is Great Tom and weighs 11,474 pounds. It has a diameter of nine feet. The bell was cast from the metal of Great Tom, at the world-famous foundry belonging to the firm of Taylor and Company at Loughborough, a market-town on the Nottinghamshire border of Leicestershire. The Great Tom once hung in a clock tower opposite Westminster. "It is never tolled," says Walter Thornbury, "but at the death or funeral of any of the Royal Family, the Bishop of London, the Dean, or the Lord Mayor, should he have died during his mayoralty."

The Church at Bakewell, in Derbyshire, has a bell which bears a singular inscription, an epitaph, as follows:

"To the Memory of  
Matthew Strutt

of this town, farmer, long famed in these parts for veterinary skill. A good neighbour, and a staunch friend to the Church and King. Being churchwarden at the time the present peal of bells were hung. Through zeal to the House of God, and unremitting attention to the airy business of the belfry, he caught a cold, which terminated his existence May 25, 1798, in the 68th year of his age."

Another equally peculiar inscription adorns the second bell in

the Church of SS. Peter and Paul at Ormby, eight miles west of Market Rasen in Lincolnshire. It is engraved: "Let us remember the 5th of November." This bell was cast in the year 1687 and refers, of course, to the abortive gunpowder plot which was to have blown up the Parliament houses in London on November 5th, 1605.

In the Church of St. Mary at Puncknowle, which lies between the River Bride in Dorsetshire and the English Channel, we may read on one of the bells:

"HETHATVILLPVRCHASHONOVRGAYNEMUST-  
ANCIENTLATHERSTILMYNTAYNE."

As a clue to the elucidation of this, obviously the longest word in the English language, we may as well explain that "lather" is an old English expression meaning "To make a noise."

The clock in the Church of St. Nicholas, Bristol, boasts the largest pendulum in the whole of Britain. Its minute hand, however, is like that of a watch.

One of the finest Perpendicular churches of Britain is that of SS. Peter and Paul Lavenham, in Suffolk. Its steeple is the loftiest of any for miles around, being 141 feet high; and it also houses a peal of eight bells, of which the tenor is one of the most famous throughout the whole of Europe, weighing 23 cwt.

But its most remarkable quality is its wonderful tone: expert opinion describes it as "a wonderfully fine-toned bell, having the reputation of being about the finest in England."

However, the most curious thing about it is that every year the "birthday" of this precious bell is celebrated with great ceremony. Every year on June 21st the whole peal of bells rings in its honour throughout the greater part of the day.

The most beautiful and delicate engraving on bells in the whole of Britain is that on the three bells in the tower of St. Mary's Church at South Somercotes, near Saltfleetby in Lincolnshire. Two of these bells are dated 1423, while the third is undated; it is much the oldest. The bells are ornamented with delicate arabesques and quaint figures. Incidentally the belfry also serves as an important landmark in this flat country, for in the whole of the Marsh district there is only one other spire, namely that at Louth.

Two miles to the west of Hastings, at Bulverhithe, between St. Leonard's and Bexhill in Sussex, there is an old chapel. The bells of this place of worship are "buried": when a heavy tide is running, the sea makes a sort of raking sound on the shingle and as they listen to this, the people round about say that they can hear the bells of Bulverhithe, and that bad weather is portended.

At Berkeley, on the Gloucester Avon, near the dungeon tower where Edward II was murdered in the year 1307, stands the



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Church of St. Mary, which has a large bell. This bell had its original home in the Buddhist temple at Ningyo.

In the tower of St. Mary's Church at Hinderclay, in Suffolk, there is a "ringers' pitcher." It bears the following inscription :

"By Samuel Moss this pitcher was given to the noble society of ringers, at Hinderclay, viz. Tho. Sturgeon. Ed. Lock, John Haws, Ric. Ruddock and Relf Chapman, to which society he once belonged, and left in the year 1702.

From London I was sent  
As plainly doth appear,  
It was to this intent  
To be filled with strong beer.

Pray remember the pitcher when empty."

A similar pitcher is to be seen in the belfry of the neighbouring church at Garboldisham in Norfolk.

In the old stone church of St. Mary at Marston Magna in Somerset, there is a peculiar clock without a face which was made for the price of £15 by the blacksmith, William Monk, in the year 1710. It has seven cog wheels, one over the other and when it ticks, it makes such an unholy noise that it has to be stopped during divine service. There is another blacksmith's clock at Yateley, Hants.

Some English churches used to be furnished with hour-glasses, and specimens of these may still be seen. The glasses were so constructed that it took an hour or a half hour for the sand to run through.

That at St. Alban's Church, Wood Street, London, is conveniently near the pulpit, within easy reach of the minister when preaching. It stands on a spiral column and is mounted in a brass gilt frame embellished with a delicately worked design.

The following churches also still have examples of this simple device for keeping preaching within bounds :

St. Nicholas Church, Keyingham, five miles south of Hedon in the East Riding of Yorkshire.

All Saints' Church, Edingthorpe, three and a half miles north-east of North Walsham, in East Norfolk, on the coast.

All Saints' Church—six miles north-east of Norwich, Norfolk (though to-day it serves as a lampbracket).

The Church of St. Mary, Leigh, Kent.

The Church of St. Edmund, South Burlingham, Norfolk.

The Church of St. Nicholas at Hurst, six miles east of Reading, Berkshire.

The glass here is mounted on a curiously wrought iron bracket, figuring a lion and a unicorn and inscribed "E.A. 1636." These

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initials are said to be those of Elizabeth Armour. On the iron stand is the further inscription :

“As this glasse runneth, so man’s life passethe.”

In two churches there are actually half-hour-glasses ; namely at All Saints’ Church, Newcastle-on-Tyne, Northumberland, and in the Church of St. Swithin, Compton Bassett, four miles north-east of Calne in Wiltshire.

An 18-minute glass timepiece may still be seen in the Royal Savoy Chapel, Savoy Street, London. It is said by some to have been presented to the church by a royal patron who was annoyed by the length of the sermons preached in his day.

George Long tells in his very fascinating book “*Churches with a Story*” (T. Werner Laurie, London), as examples of humour in our churches :

“This being so, it is not surprising that sluggard-wakers were frequently used. Money was sometimes left by pious church members to pay sluggard-wakers and dog-whippers. At Claverley (Salop), Richard Dovey, in the year 1659, left certain property on condition that eight shillings per annum be paid to a poor man to awaken sleepers in the church and to drive out dogs. In 1725 at Trysull (Staffs.), John Rudge left twenty shillings per annum for the same purpose. At Chislet (Kent) a piece of land is still known as Dog-wipper’s Marsh, because formerly ten shillings yearly of its rent was devoted to this purpose.

“No doubt in those days people were accustomed to take their dogs with them to church, and in Norway I have myself seen the same quaint custom, and as many as five dogs sitting quietly in their places during the sermon and behaving with the utmost decorum.

“The usual method of the sluggard-waker was to carry a long rod, having a fox’s brush at one end and a knob at the other. If a lady were asleep he gently tickled her face with the brush, but a male sinner received a bump with the knob which effectively brought him back from dreamland.

“In some instances the thrifty Scots improved on this method by constructing a double-purpose instrument. In Dumfries Church there is preserved a collection-box at the end of a long pole which formerly was also used as a sluggard-waker. It will be remembered that Robbie Burns worshipped in this church, and as sluggard-waking was an office of the deacon, this may account for the Scottish bard’s well-known antipathy to the ‘Holy Wullies’ of his day.

“Very quaint and curious was the use of the Caistor Gad-whip, which, however, has been discontinued since 1846. It was a long whip, having a silk purse tied to it containing thirty pieces of silver and four strips of wych-elm. The whip was cracked three times

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in church during the Palm Sunday service, and then waved over the head of the clergyman during the service.

"At the request of the churchwardens the practice was discontinued, as being out of place during divine service, although of considerable interest to antiquarians.

"In the interesting old church of Pewsey (Wilts.), there is a curious glazed, cupboard-like recess hewn out of a pillar in the nave. It contains several grey goose feathers, and the following remarkable inscription is attached to the pillar :

" 'This recess was discovered at the Restoration of the Church in 1800. It then enclosed some feathers, which are now replaced. Its object is uncertain, but probably it was a reliquary supposed to contain feathers dropped by the Angel Gabriel in the Temple, as many churches on the Continent dedicated to St. John the Baptist have such reliquaries.'

"Although this will raise a smile to-day, and certainly has its amusing side, we ought not to forget how much we owe to the Reformers who swept away so many gross abuses like this, and thereby increased the power and strengthened the witness of our National Church."

The most wonderful English work of art from the Elizabethan period is to be found in the Blount Chapel of the Church of St. John the Baptist, Kinlet, four and a half miles south-west of Highley in Shropshire. It is a marble tomb with an alabaster canopy and kneeling figures, and is dedicated to Sir George Blount, Kt., and Lord of Kinlet, "a distinguished soldier and high sheriff of Shropshire," who died in 1581, his wife Constantia and their two children, John and Dorothy.

On the Gloucestershire border of Wiltshire, between Evesham and Campden, one and a quarter miles south-east of Littleton, lies the village of Bretforton. It belonged to the parish chapelry of Evesham and its revenues were used to buy cheese and ale, from which the famous local sauce was prepared.

The Abbey Church at Battle, on the road from Tonbridge to Hastings in Sussex, was erected by William the Norman on the site of his victory over the English army on October 14th, 1066. The High Altar marks the spot where King Harold II and his brother Gurth were actually struck down when their standard was overthrown. The church was dedicated to St. Martin.

William had a dream, according to which it was foretold that his dynasty would last as many years as the church measured in feet. On waking, William gave instructions that the walls were to be built 500 feet long, but in actuality the length was only 315 feet.

In this church was kept the famous Battle Abbey Roll on which was the list of those warriors who came over with William the

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Conqueror. But in the year 1793 this unique document, along with William's sword, was destroyed by fire.

In more recent times the Abbey belonged to Miss Lucy Webster who had her private girls' school there. The entrance gate-house consists of a tower with an octagonal turret at each angle. It is the most perfect example in Britain of a monastic gate-house.

The Church at Cumnor, near Oxford has in it the finest chained Bible in England, dating from the year 1611. It is a copy of the first edition of King James' Authorized Version of the Holy Scriptures, bound in wooden covers with iron bands to strengthen them. A heavy iron chain fastens it to the book-rest of one of the pews.

The belief in the miraculous healing power of this valuable book for centuries attracted to the Church those stricken with sickness and disease. Just a touch of the Holy Book, and many of these were delivered from severe afflictions. But in front of the door of this Church it was that the last witches on British soil were hanged. Mrs. Hicks and her nine-year-old daughter, from Huntingdon, met their death here on July 28th, 1716.

It was not until the year 1736 that an official bann was placed in England on this bloodthirsty mania of the Middle Ages for putting witches to death.

The most beautiful porch in Britain is claimed by the Church of SS. Peter and Paul at Northleach, in Gloucestershire, in the Cotswold hills, lying at an elevation of 552 feet.

The finest and longest cloisters in Britain are those at Gloucester. The walks are 150 feet long, 12 feet wide and 18 feet high. Their construction was commenced in 1551 but not completed until 60 years later. The south walk is divided into 20 cells with windows, where the monks would sit at their writing or their studies. In the north walk is a large trough, which was used by the monks as a lavatory; opposite it is a recess in which they placed their towels.

Very unexpected was the discovery made by the occupants of Abbot's Court, a fine half-timbered farm-house in the village of Deerhurst, near Tewkesbury in Gloucestershire in the year 1885. Their curiosity was aroused by certain features of the building which, on investigation proved it to have been built onto a Saxon chapel, probably one of the oldest churches in Europe. When the house was built in the 16th century, it was constructed round the chapel belonging to the adjoining manor house; the original doors and windows were plastered over, and other windows cut to illumine the new building. When, by chance, the plaster was removed in 1885, the character of the building became manifest.

Odda or Dodd, Duke of Mercia, had once established here a monastery in honour of the Virgin Mary, but the monastery was subsequently destroyed by the Danes. About the year 980, the

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buliding was restored as a Benedictine monastery and, through the mediation of Edward the Confessor, subordinated to the Abbey of St. Denis near Paris.

As early as 1675, a stone was dug up from the soil hereabouts, with an inscription which told how Odda, Duke or Earl of Mercia, established here an "aula regia" in honour of the Holy Trinity.

The stone is now to be seen at the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford, and has the reputation of being a lucky talisman. The legend was that anyone who touched it would rapidly acquire fame and honour and also material prosperity.

One would have expected that, this being the case, the man who discovered it in the field and dug it out deserved a brilliant career: in actuality, soon after finding it he was appointed Town Clerk of the city of Gloucester and later Justice of the Queen's Bench.

The Ecclesiastical Commissioners gave permission for the chapel thus discovered in the farm-house to be restored. In 1886 the "new" walls were dismantled, the old doors and windows laid bare, and the chancel restored, so that the Saxon chapel regained its original appearance.

"In the virgin's crown, or maiden's garland, Minsterley Church has, as local antiquarians know, quite a unique collection of relics of what was an interesting and touching custom. Not that Minsterley is alone in possession of virgins' garlands. Several of the churches in the neighbourhood of Shrewsbury have them. Shrawardine Church had several such in 1840, one of which was placed there together with a pair of gloves in memory of a much-beloved young woman of the village, who, about half a century ago, lost her life in crossing the Severn.

"But at Minsterley there are no fewer than seven of these garlands. Projecting from the upper part of the interior north and south wall of the church are several short iron rods, topped by heart-shaped escutcheons. To these iron brackets garlands or crowns were originally attached, but seven of them now depend from the gallery walls. Each measures a full foot in height. The wooden framework is covered with linen, and in it are seven lilies and roses of two sizes, made of pink and white paper. From the lower part depend short paper streamers, principally blue and white, but in one instance there are, in addition, strips of red cloth. Within these crowns are hung three pairs of gloves cut out of white paper. These garlands were formerly laid on the coffin of the deceased maiden before the burial, borne by her companions before her body to the grave, and finally hung over her seat in church to keep her memory green.

"Minsterley tradition says that they are the memorials of betrothed maidens who died constant to their affianced lovers." (*"Bygones,"* April 19, 1905.)

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A quarrel between two men, described by Sir Walter Scott in Canto VI of his "Rokeby," conferred world-wide fame on the Holy Trinity Church of Kendal, or Kirkly Kendal, near Windermere. Part of this church is known as the Bellingham Chapel, since it contains the altar-tomb of Sir Robert Bellingham (died 1553) and his lady, Margaret. This part of the church also houses a rather unique church ornament, namely the helmet which belonged Major Robert Philipson, a Royalist officer at the time of the Commonwealth, who lived at Belle Isle, Windermere and was known as "Robert the Devil" on account of his turbulent career.

The story of how the helmet came by its place in the church is told by the old chroniclers as follows:

"Major Philipson came, accompanied by a small band of Cavaliers, on a Sunday to Kendal in search of Colonel Briggs a leading magistrate and officer in the Cromwellian army. Being informed that the Colonel was at his prayers (for it was on a Sunday morning), he stationed his men properly in the avenues, and himself armed, rode directly into the church."

As he entered the building his helmet was knocked off his head by the lintel of the low doorway.

"It is said he intended to seize the Colonel and carry him off; but as this seems to have been totally impracticable it is rather probable that his intention was to kill him on the spot, and in the midst of the confusion to escape. Whatever his intention was, it was frustrated, for Briggs happened to be elsewhere. The congregation, as might be expected, was thrown into great confusion on seeing an armed man on horseback make his appearance among them; and the major, taking advantage of their astonishment, turned his horse round, and rode quietly out. But having given an alarm, he was presently assaulted as he left the assembly; and, being seized, his girths were cut and he was unhorsed. At this instant, his party made a furious attack on the assailants, and the major killed with his own hand the man who had seized him, clapped the saddle, ungirthed as it was, upon his horse, and, vaulting into it, rode full speed through the streets of Kendal, calling his men to follow him; and with his whole party made a safe retreat to his asylum in the lake. The action marked the man. Many knew him, and they who did not knew as well from the exploit that it could be nobody but Robin the Devil."

What may well be the most curious of all font inscriptions throughout the world is that to be found in the Church of St. Mary, in the picturesque little oyster-fishing village of Tollesbury, 12 miles south-east of Witham in Essex. It runs:

"Good people all I pray take care,  
That in ye church you do not swear  
As this man did."

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It is only after long and diligent search that the explanation of this peculiar exhortation is found, in the curious secret betrayed by the Parish Register of Baptisms, which contains the following entry :

"August 30th, 1718, Elizabeth, daughter of Robert and Eliza Wood, being ye first childe who was baptised in the New Font which was bought out of five pounds paid by John Norman who come few months before came drunk into the church and cursed and talked loud in the time of Divine service, to prevent his being prosecuted for which he paid by agreement the above said five pounds. Note that the wise rhymes on the font were put there by the sole order of Robert Joyce then churchwarden."

Another strange exhortation is found in the old Church of St. Botolph in the village of Stoke Albany, three and a half miles north of Desborough in Northamptonshire. Here there is a tablet which reads :

"Men arte desired to scrape their  
shoes and the women to take off their  
Pattens before they enter this church."

George Long writes in his book "*Churches with Stories*" :

"In the beautiful choir of St. David's Cathedral there is a carving representing a cowed fox presenting the sacramental wafer to a human-headed goose.

"The choir of Hereford Cathedral is very dark, but by means of my pocket-torch I discovered a pair of misereres, on a subject which I have found in many other places. The first can be fully described. It represents a domestic scene in the 14th century. A woman, probably a serving-maid, is sitting beside the fire where a large pot is boiling. A man is on his knees before her and has seized her ankle in his left hand, while at the same instant she throws a wooden platter at his head. The second picture represents the same couple, and it is sufficient to say that he has now become bolder and she more complaisant. I will describe others of this type later.

"The third example is in the King Henry VII Chapel at Westminster Abbey, which I regard as one of the most interesting collections of the kind in Europe. A slim, pert baggage is sitting beside an elderly, bearded man. He has his arm round her waist, and hers is round his neck, but his other hand is in his roomy purse getting out his money. I have no doubt that this represents a sordid gold-digger of the 16th century with a "sugar-daddy" of the period. These things are interesting as picturing daily life in the Dark Ages, but it is amazing that such crude lampoons should be

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found in churches built by celibate orders rigidly vowed to chastity!"

The west side of the Cathedral of Peterborough was so sacred that "the King or the beggar was compelled before passing through the gateway into the precinct to put off his shoes and enter barefooted, for a pilgrimage hither was regarded as equivalent to visiting the threshold of the Apostles at Rome."

At Houghton-in-the-Dale, near Walsingham in Norfolk, there is a little chapel, known as "Shoe House," or "Slipper House."

Here pilgrims to Walsingham had to take off their shoes, completing their journey barefoot.

Not far from this chapel is the famous pilgrims' shrine, the Priory of Walsingham, five miles south-east of Wells, in North Norfolk, founded in 1061 by Edwy the Clerk. In 1090, the mother of Geoffrey de Favranches erected there a little chapel dedicated to the Virgin Mary (the Chapel of Our Lady of Walsingham), built on the same plan as the Santa Casa of Nazareth.

When Nazareth fell into the hands of the Infidels, the Monks of Walsingham declared that the Virgin had transferred her presence from the Santa Casa to Walsingham. It was the recognition of this claim that made the chapel at Walsingham one of the most frequented places of pilgrimage in the British Isles, for devotees came to it from all parts of Europe. Nearby are two wells, known as "The Wishing Wells": a draught of their consecrated waters assured the fulfilment of all wishes.

In our own day, only the ruins of these sacred monuments remain, but the stream of pilgrims continues almost unabated.

In the charmingly situated village of Bromham on the north bank of the Bedfordshire Ouse, on the road between Bedford and Northampton, there is a very curious chantry chapel, built in the year 1295, "for the safety of travellers who were in danger of thieves."

But for the rarest of curiosities, one should go to the Cathedrals of Britain; and they are, moreover, so numerous that we can mention only the most curious of them.

The smallest Cathedral in Great Britain is that of St. Asaph, five miles north of Denbigh, in the north-west of Flintshire, in North Wales. It nestles in the slopes of the hills above the confluence of the Clwyd and the Elwy, between the two rivers. The church is only 182 feet long and the nave only 68 feet wide, but for all its smallness, it boasts a magnificent organ.

The squarest and the most unobtrusive of England's—or even of Europe's—cathedrals is that at Oxford, formerly St. Frideswide's, but now known as the Cathedral Church of Christ. It lies tucked away behind a corner of the great Tom Quadrangle of Christ Church College, which it also serves as chapel. But it has no





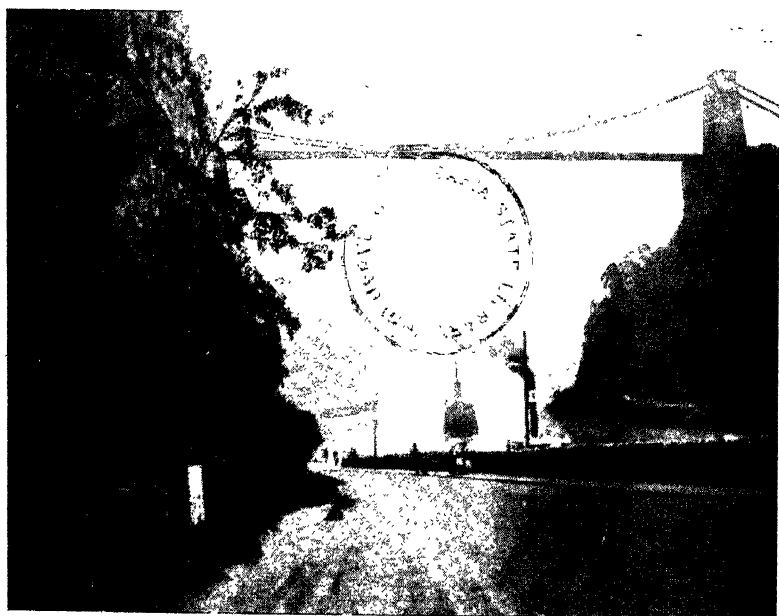
XLII. THE FOUR CROSSES INN, WATLING STREET



XLIII. HIGH BRIDGE WITH HOUSES ON IT, LINCOLN



XLIII. THE FALSTAFF INN AND WESTGATE, CANTERBURY



XLIV. CLIFTON SUSPENSION BRIDGE, BRISTOL

## ECCLESIASTICAL CURIOSITIES

reason to be so shy, for it possesses many beautiful features and is further interesting as comprising, in its fabric, some of the oldest masonry in Great Britain.

The most loftily situated of England's cathedrals is the proud fane of St. Albans, in Hertfordshire. It stands, a little withdrawn from the town, on the green hillside, 320 feet above the sea level. Both in style and in fabric it shows a marked variety. The reddish tinges, most obvious in the tower, indicate the presence of Roman bricks from the old settlement of Verulamium lying at the foot of the hill and now emerging from obscurity through careful excavation.

The most exquisite choir stalls are those in the Cathedral Church of Christ and the Blessed Virgin Mary at Chester, which incidentally also houses one of the few public gifts which adorned the otherwise graceless churches which survived Henry VIII's reorganisation of the established church. It is the pulpit, one of the finest to be seen in any of the cathedrals of Europe.

Dean Cranage writes: "One of the most extraordinary erections in any cathedral in the world: at the Chapel of St. Anne at Norwich Cathedral (Norfolk) is a bridge, erected first of all in the later part of the 13th century and extended eastward in the 15th century."

In bygone days behind the High Altar of this lovely and deservedly famous Cathedral Church of the Holy Trinity at Norwich, there stood a Lady Chapel; but in our own day all that remains of it is the entrance, with its arches, at the east end of the choir aisle.

In the Presbytery of the Cathedral are the remains of a Norman Bishop's throne, the only one in northern Europe which still stands on its original site. It is heavy, of severe design and executed in stone, and the seat rests on a semi-circular arch. A broad flight of steps leads up to the throne and, on special occasions, the Bishop sat enthroned, with his priests below him, in due order of precedence, as he pronounced the episcopal blessing. Marks on the pavement, too, show where the seats of the lesser church dignitaries were placed, and from them the whole ceremony has been reconstructed. Those who are versed in these matters aver that these indications prove beyond any question of doubt that in the 12th century at Norwich the sacred service of the Holy Eucharist was performed with the officiating bishop facing west instead of east. And, so far as the evidence goes, this arrangement was quite unique.

Another peculiarity of this Cathedral is that it possesses the largest monastic cloister of any in Britain, each walk being 170 feet long and about 12 feet wide.

A unique feature of the Cathedral Church at Chichester is its campanile, which is 120 feet high. Here too one finds the oldest

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pictures of the Life of Christ that have been preserved in any British cathedral, dating as they do from the year 1000.

Apart from the marvellous east window in the Cathedral Church of St. Peter at York, which has already been referred to, this church may claim to have the largest central tower of any similar building in Europe; it has been described as "a triumph of massive simplicity that ranks among the most spectacular constructional achievements of the 15th century." It is the highest and broadest of Britain's cathedrals.

In the matter of the West Front, this cathedral is thought by many to be rivalled by that of Peterborough Cathedral, whereas others declare that, in this particular, too, York may claim the palm for architectural beauty. But however that may be, this façade furnishes an example of the most magnificent gothic architecture and workmanship, comparable only to that of the world-famous cathedral of Rheims in France. It was Sir Walter Scott who praised this English masterpiece of human craftsmanship as "the most august of temples, the noble Minster of York."

The Cathedral of Christ Church at Canterbury claims as its curiosity the famous crypt, of which the connoisseur Van Rennselaer says: "No crypt in the world is so stupendous or so interesting, either structurally or historically." It was constructed in the years 1096—1107 and extends all the way under the floor of the Cathedral from the choir screen eastwards. It is reached by way of the lower north cross aisle of the Cathedral, also known as the "martyrdom," and gives one the impression, as one enters, of a complicated maze of rounded arches. As one proceeds eastwards, it will be noticed that the arches grow higher, whilst the piers on which they rest gradually change from roughly-hewn blocks of stone to slender, graceful columns. Some of the columns have ornamented capitals, and of these some are unfinished. The place is instinct with solemnity, and forms a fitting setting for that most impressive incident in English history, the penance of Henry II after the murder of Becket. For it was here that the mortal remains of the martyred statesman-priest were buried in 1170, and hither Henry II made pilgrimage to expiate his complicity in the murder. Dressed as a pilgrim, unshod and footsore, he came here to receive his punishment with the scourge at the hands of the abbot and monks and to spend the night in prayer before the martyr's shrine.

The lovely Cathedral Church of St. Mary at Lichfield in Staffordshire possesses not one spire, but a wonderful group of spires, called by poets the "Ladies of the Vale." But the highest cathedral spire is that of Salisbury Cathedral, soaring up 404 feet into the heavens.

History, however, can tell of two even taller English spires, both

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of them destroyed by fire in the middle ages. Old St. Paul's had a tower of 520 feet high, built in the 13th century, but destroyed on January 4th, 1561. The second was the tower of Lincoln Cathedral, 524 feet high, blown down in 1547.

On seeing Salisbury Cathedral, Pugin exclaimed: "Well, I have travelled over Europe in search of architecture, but I have seen nothing like this."

At the time of its consecration, on July 15th, 1093, the Cathedral Church of the Holy and Indivisible Trinity at Winchester claimed the distinction of being the largest cathedral church in the world, and, as was only fitting, all the English clergy were present at the ceremony. It is 556 feet long and 217 broad and the central tower is 138 feet high, and even to-day should be reckoned amongst the largest as well as the most magnificent of the world's churches.

The site on which Sir Christopher Wren built his masterpiece, the renowned Cathedral Church of St. Paul in London, was formerly occupied by a Roman Temple of Diana. The cost of its erection was met out of the revenue derived from the tax on coal; Wren received a salary of £200 a year!

Westminster Abbey shelters some of the world's most famous graves and has the most powerful organ. It also houses the rarest collection of royal effigies, containing wax figures of most of the English sovereigns which used to be carried in procession in funeral ceremonies. The oldest original figure is that of Charles II., which is still in a good state of preservation.

The most famous crypt belonging to a small church is to be found at Hexham, in Northumberland. Its existence was forgotten and not rediscovered until the year 1725. To get to it, one must clamber down a ladder leading down from a spot near the south-west pier of the tower. Entering through a low doorway, little over six feet in height, one finds oneself in a low chamber, some eight or nine feet high, consisting of a central chapel 13½ feet long and eight feet wide, with aisles on the north, west and south sides.

The finest example of a Saxon crypt is to be found in the Church of Lastingham, five miles east of Kirby Moorside in Yorkshire. It lies beneath the present-day church, but was itself formerly a church. With the exception of the west bay, it is built in the early Norman style and dates from about 1078. It has a vaulted roof, the arches being circular and with flat ribs, supported on massive piers with capitals ornamented with designs of interlacing arches and rude arabesques.

At various places in England there are famous labyrinths, or mazes, which are still tended. Many of these were originally built by monks. The most famous of all the mazes is that on the northern side of Hampton Court Palace, in the large space which

was formerly laid out by William III and known as "The Wilderness." It is constructed on the hedge and alley system. In order to get to the middle safely, one must keep the right hand in unbroken contact with the hedge from beginning to end, going round all the barriers.

Another remarkable maze is that planned by John Thomas in the garden of Somerleyton Hall, six miles north-west of Lowestoft, in Suffolk. Hilton, in Huntingdonshire, has a very large "Pilgrims' maze." Every one of the pilgrims had to shuffle round the whole of the way to the middle of this on his knees. Since the year 1380 there has been a maze in a bay in the north aisle of the St. Mary Redcliffe Church at Bristol. Although only four inches in diameter, the complete path to the centre measures more than ten inches in length.

A well-preserved example may be seen in the village of Asenby, in Swaledale, Yorkshire. It measures 51 feet across. There is another on the village green at Hilton, in Huntingdonshire, near the Cambridgeshire border. Its centre is marked by a stone pillar, with an inscription in Latin and English, stating that it was laid out by William Sparrow in the year 1660.

A similar maze, known as "Julian Bower," forms one of the sights of Alkborough in Lincolnshire, on the east site of the Trent Falls, near its confluence with the Ouse.

In the days of William the Conqueror, there was here a small monastic house, a subsidiary of the monastery at Spalding, under the supervision of three monks, a secular chaplain and a prior. The maze appears to have been cut in the year 1000. It measures 44 feet across and, as the historian of these parts says, "by a happy suggestion, the design of this has been repeated, as was above remarked, in the porch of the Parish Church, so that, should the original unfortunately be destroyed, a permanent record has been provided." Incidentally, the hill on which it is situated was also the site of a Roman camp and settlement known as Acquis.

At Broughton Green, on the road from Northampton to Market Harborough, there is a maze measuring 37 feet in diameter. There is another near Wing, one and threequarter miles from Manton, in Rutland, which measures 40 feet across; it is the scene of local festivities.

In the grounds of the village school at Comerberton, two miles north-west of Lord's Bridge Station in Cambridgeshire, there is a labyrinth, which measures 50 feet across. The paths are two feet wide and are defined by small trenches, the whole surface sloping down towards the centre. "Mize-Maze" is the name given to that at Chilcombe on the Dorsetshire coast, four miles south-east of Bridport. It has been cut in the turf on St. Catherine's Hill, each side being 86 feet in length. But what is probably the largest of

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these mazes is that to be seen at Saffron Waldon in Essex; it measures 110 feet in diameter.

It is of unusual design, the main outline being circular, with four horse-shoe shaped projections at equal distances round the circumference.

There seems to be no end to the list of curious crosses on British soil, and the following are but a few chosen from this wealth of material.

The oldest cross which has come down to our own time is one which stands in the churchyard at Mylor, in Cornwall, and was said originally to have been a monument marking the grave of the martyr St. Mylord. It is  $17\frac{1}{2}$  feet high and is thus one of the largest crosses in England, being hewn out of a single block of stone. It was found towards the middle of last century and set up in 1870 in its present position.

Complete obscurity shrouds the origin of a cross in Lancaster which bears the Runic inscription: "PRAY FOR CYNIBALD THE SON OF CUTHBERT."

For centuries now the experts have been at loggerheads over the authentic history of the world-famous cross which stands in the precincts of the St. Mary Church at Gosforth in Cumberland. It is a monolith of red sandstone, 15 feet high and over 14 inches thick; the lower half is rounded, but the upper part cut nearly square. Some maintain that it is of Anglian or Scandinavian origin, whereas others regard it as a monument erected by the Irish.

Not far away, three other crosses were unearthed; these are known as "Hogbacks," "The Warrior's Tomb" and "The Saint's Tomb."

The eighth century is given as the probable date of origin of the loveliest of all the Saxon crosses hitherto discovered. But this is only two and a half feet high. It stands on the south side of the Church of Eyam in Derbyshire, having been dug up in a corner of the churchyard in 1800. The cross-limbed head is well preserved.

Near the village of Hughenden, two miles north of High Wycombe, in Buckinghamshire, where Lord Beaconsfield had his estate, there is a cross cut into the turf. It is said to be a monument to the victory of the Christian Saxons over the Danes in the battle which tradition says was fought here.

There is a cross in the churchyard of the little village of Stringston, two miles inland from the English Channel in Somersetshire, and as they pass this holy monument, all the inhabitants, for centuries past, have always bowed low.

Of market crosses, the loveliest amongst those which still stand is that at Chichester in Sussex.

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The Chichester market cross was set up in the year 1478 by Edward Storey, Bishop of Chichester, and was subsequently restored during the reign of Charles II (in 1670) by the Duke of Richmond. It is built on an octagonal plan, consisting of an open arcade, with moulded, richly ornamented arches.

That at Shepton Mallet was constructed in 1505 : it is hexagonal in design, and 51 feet high. This too has open arches and ornamented pinnacles, and is surmounted by a spire which rises in three tiers. The whole is supported by a platform with three steps. It bears the following inscription :

“ Of yor charitye pray for  
the soules of Walter Bucklond and Agnys hys wyff  
by whoys goods thys Crosse was made  
in the yere of our Lord God M D C  
whoys obbytt, shal be kepte for Ever.  
in the parisshe church of Shepton Marlett  
ye XXVIII day of November  
on whoys soules the pardon.”

Perry's Cross, a memorial to Sir Ralph Perry, who fell in the Battle of Hedgeley Moor, stands beside the road from Morpeth to Wooler in Northumberland.

The spot where Lord Audley fell on September 23rd, 1459, when leading the Lancastrian forces in the Wars of the Roses, is marked by the Audley Cross, which may be seen in the town of Market Drayton in Shropshire. Incidentally, a curious custom from feudal times is still observed in this town. Fairs are held here three times a year, on September 19th, October 24th and November 24th, and these are proclaimed by the Steward of the Manor. During the fairs, a special “ court of piepoudre ” is held, before which all disputes arising while the fair lasts are brought for settlement.

Many experts are agreed that the most graceful churchyard cross in Britain is that which stands in the churchyard at Somersby, seven miles north-east of Horncastle in Lincolnshire. It adorns the spot where Wordsworth's successor as poet laureate, Alfred Lord Tennyson, sleeps his last sleep. Here, in this little village he was born, his father being Rector of the parish. The cross, which is 15 feet high, springs from a beautiful octagonal column, resting on a square base and is surmounted by an embattled triangle.

Near Bath House, at Ashby-de-la-Zouche, in Leicestershire, there is a magnificent cross seventy feet high ; it was set up in 1878 by Sir George Gilbert Scott in memory of the deceased Edith Countess of Loudoun. This memorial is particularly noteworthy since it was modelled on one of the most famous of all English crosses, namely the Eleanor Cross at Geddington.



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And this brings us to those crosses which stand as the everlasting memorial to the touching love of a monarch for his lost queen, the devotion of Edward I to Eleanor of Castile.

In September 1290 the royal couple were journeying through Nottinghamshire and, on September 11th of that year, stopped to rest at the house of Richard de Weston, in Harby. Here the Queen fell ill and had to take to her bed, whilst Edward continued his journey to visit some friends in the neighbourhood, returning on the 20th to his wife's sick-bed in Harby. But he found her seriously ill, and too bad to be moved; seven days later death closed her eyes for ever.

Edward was inconsolable, but he maintained that "I loved her tenderly in her lifetime, and I do not cease to love her now she is dead." So he had the coffin with its precious burden carried with great pomp to Westminster for burial there, and at each of the twelve places where the coffin rested, Edward had a memorial cross erected; the first was at Swine Green in Lincolnshire; but though repaired at public expense in 1624, in 1643 it was completely destroyed. Not far from it another cross was erected, which was subsequently invariably mistaken for the Eleanor Cross, whereas actually it was put there to commemorate the end of the Great Plague.

The other stages in the sorrowful journey were marked by crosses at Grantham (Nottinghamshire), Stamford (Rutland), Geddington (Northamptonshire), Northampton, Stony Stratford (Northamptonshire), Woburn (Buckinghamshire), Dunstable (Bedfordshire), St. Albans (Hertfordshire), Waltham (Hertfordshire), Westcheap (Essex), and London, Charing Cross. But of these only three have survived the passage of time, namely those at Geddington, Northampton and Waltham.

The Geddington Cross stands on a base of seven steps and is built on a triangular plan, its three faces sheltered by canopies. Notable features of the rich adornment of the monument are roses, delicately carved, and bearing the arms of Castile, Leon and Ponthieu; statues of the Queen and pinnacles. It is an ornate work of art, but carried out with rare workmanship.

The Waltham Cross is one of the richest specimens of mediaeval architecture which has come down to our own day. But the best preserved of the three is that in Nottinghamshire.

The Eleanor Cross at Charing Cross, London, was removed by the direction of Parliament in the year 1647, and the present structure is modern.

The only extant martyr's stake is that to be seen at the Church of Abergwilli, in South Wales. Here too, a victim of the anti-protestant persecution of 1555 lies buried: he was Robert Ferrar, Bishop of St. David's.

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Another gruesome reminder of that far-past time of intolerance is to be seen in the Museum at Derby. It is the quartering bench and the block. The Derby prison, since demolished, housed the last Britons who, in 1817, were condemned to be hanged, drawn and quartered on a charge of high treason.

A stone set in the wall of St. Bartholomew's Hospital, Smithfield, London (commonly called Barts) commemorates the burning of three Protestants on November 18th, 1557, during the reign of Queen Mary, daughter of Katharine of Aragon. This seems to be the site of a public place of execution: the Scottish hero, William Wallace, was executed here in the year 1381, and it was here that Sir William Walworth, Lord Mayor of London, struck down his enemy, Wat Tyler. In Elizabeth's reign, several Anabaptists were burned at the stake here.

The inscription on the tablet in the wall tells how John Hallingdale, William Sparrow and Master Gibson suffered martyrdom. Fox writes in his "*Book of Martyrs*":

"And so these three godly men being thus appointed to the slaughter, were, the twelfth day after their condemnation, burnt in Smithfield, London. And being brought thither to the stake, after their prayer made, they were bound thereunto with chains, and wood set unto them; and after wood, fire, in the which being compassed about, and the fiery flames consuming their flesh, at the last they yielded gloriously and joyfully their souls and lives into the holy hands of the Lord, to whose tuition and government I commend thee, good reader, Amen."

Another martyrs' monument stands near the Nelson monument, in Waterloo Place, Edinburgh, on the site of the Old Calton burial ground. It is a tall obelisk and was erected in the year 1845 in memory of five political martyrs, Muir, Palmer, Skirving, Gerrald and Margarot, who were banished in the year 1793 for advocating parliamentary reform.

## CHAPTER VIII

### DEVILRY AND HAUNTINGS

"O you believe in ghosts?" asked a gentleman of *Madame du Deffaud*.

"No," replied that witty lady, "but I am afraid of them." Preface to "*Haunted Houses*," by Charles G. Harper.

The Austrians are an optimistic people, for they sing: "Surely the Almighty is a Viennese" ("*Der Herrgott muss ein Wiener sein!*").

Britons, however, are more sceptical and seem to believe that the Devil pursues his nefarious activities in their country.

If you doubt this, look at the map and you will be horrified to find how widespread are the localities where the Prince of Darkness has been at work.

Let us run round the Island and see how the Devil's spoor can be traced all over the place.

It is said of Cape Morte Point, by Morte Bay on the north-west coast of Devonshire, near Ilfracombe, that it is "the place on the earth which the Lord made last and which the Devil will take first." Be that as it may, the godforsaken wastes of Woollacombe Sands speak for themselves, as they stretch from Morte Point to Baggy Point, over three and a half miles away.

And it is common knowledge that he swallowed up a whole city: the city of Langarrow, which used to stand on the coast of Perran Bay, between Newquay and Perranporth.

The Devil's Cheeseering is near the Liskeard Hurlers in Cornwall, and another at Lynton.

The Devil's Quoits, in west Oxfordshire, half a mile south of Stanton-Harcourt, where the Britons and Saxons fought their famous battle, commemorates a game of quoits which the Devil played for the soul of a beggar. There is also an ancient barrow here, which has been disturbed, though legend is silent as to whether the King of Darkness is to blame for that too.

There are two Devil's Punch Bowls on British soil. One is to be found near Hindhead, in the south-west of Surrey, 895 feet up in the hills near Haslemere. Here he celebrated a veritable orgy through the souls of three bandits. In the year 1786 these bewitched rogues murdered an unknown sailor. On the spot where the victim was found there stands a stone, on which the

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story of the murder is recorded as it is believed to have been committed. And lest the dreadful crime which it commemorates should ever be forgotten, they moved the stone so as still to stand by the roadside when the course of the latter was recently changed.

The second Devil's Punch Bowl lies high up at Mangerton, in Ireland. It is even said that the bowl used to steam. Many geologists, who seem to have little opinion of the Devil, say that this must be the crater of an extinct volcano.

At Kirkby Stephen, Westmorland, on the Eden, stands the Bound Devil. Legend has it that an innocent young girl with superhuman strength, dragged this huge stone here from miles away, as a barrier against the Devil, who had designs on her poor old mother. Archaeologists agree with this romantic story only in so far as they admit that the stone must have been brought to its present place from far away. According to them, it must have come from Scandinavia and has been in its present position since about 700 B.C.

At Bollait, near Lamorna in West Cornwall, the Devil turned two maidens and their musical admirers into stone as "The Pipers and Merry Maidens." But they were simply asking for it: the youths were imprudent enough to play on a Sunday and the maidens danced to their music.

At Eildon, near Melrose in north-west Roxburghshire, Michael Scott of Balwearie made a pact with the local demon and induced him to conjure three hills out of one mountain. On the slopes here there is a tumulus and the remains of a Roman fort. Incidentally this was the favourite haunt of Sir Walter Scott.

The Devil played a nasty trick on the tower of the Church of St. Mary and All Saints at Chesterfield: he just broke it, so that the steeple is now quite crooked, being six feet out of the perpendicular in one direction and four feet in another. The more prosaic explanation attributes this to the "creeping" of the material which forms the covering of the steeple, or the warping of insufficiently weathered wood used in its construction.

And of course, as is only to be expected, the Devil cannot help interfering wherever a church is built in a place which he regards as his own domain. For instance, in the village of Udimore in east Sussex, two and three quarter miles north-west of Winchelsea, they built a church and during the night they heard it creaking and groaning, "O'er the mere, o'er the mere!" And the next morning the inhabitants found to their horror that the church had moved to an entirely different site.

At Brent Tor, near Lydford in Devon, 1,100 feet up, the Devil actually made away with a complete church and the neighbouring parsonage overnight.

At Breedon, seven and a half miles east of Ashby-de-la-Zouche,

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in north-west Leicestershire, the Devil tried to stop them from putting up the church. Suddenly, during the night the local people heard an ear-splitting din, just as if someone were being beaten. When they ventured out, in the dim light of dawn, they found that the half-built walls of their new place of worship had been torn down. But when twilight fell, thousands of doves appeared on the scene and proceeded to rebuild the church—at least so the chronicles say—so that by morning it was completed.

The inhabitants of Leyland, in Cornwall, had a similar experience, but in their case the strange builder was a dog, whereas at Winwick, in south-west Lancashire, it was a pig. At Cashel, the ancient seat of the Kings of Munster and the birthplace of Dean Swift, in Ireland, the Devil hid himself inside a bull, breathing fire through his nostrils. But one of the followers of St. Patrick tackled the bewitched beast by jumping on to him from a perch on the rocky hillside and managed to overpower him. The imprint of the frenzied animal's flanks is still shown nearby on one of the walls.

William Edward Armitage Axon, in his contribution to William Andrews' book on "*Antiquities and Curiosities of the Church*," tells the following story :

"At West Walton, near Wisbech, Norfolk, there is a detached tower standing near the churchyard gate. Originally, a local legend declares, it adjoined the church until the Devil, for some unexplained reason, took a special dislike to it, and decided to remove it. But instead of employing his own imps, he engaged a 'number of people' of the human race to carry it off. They were too strong, for they got the tower on their shoulders, but they were not intelligent, as they could not get it through the gate, which was too narrow, or over the churchyard wall, which was too high, and so after marching all round in search of an outlet, they dropped it where it now stands."

At Bryn-y-ffynon in the north-east of Carnarvon, according to local tradition, the Evil One took possession of the soul of the owner of a plot of ground which the local people wanted to buy for the purpose of erecting a church, and so hardened the man's heart that he obdurately refused to part with this parcel of his land. So they were forced to content themselves with another place which was not nearly so desirable a site. The story proceeds to relate how the children banded together and prayed aloud in the streets, imploring the good God to deliver the wretched landlord from his affliction and turn him again into a decent human being. Then, it seems, their good angel decided to grant the children's petition, for during the night the half built walls of the church were torn down by invisible hands and from midnight until the first rays of dawn appeared, an unearthly voice called on the landlord by

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name, until the poor man, robbed of his sleep at night and of his peace of mind by day, relented and gave the plot of land as a free gift for the building of the church.

There are a number of places in Britain where the Devil can be heard whistling. He practises this art most frequently and most boldly at two places, known respectively as the "Devil's Bellows" and the "Devil's Throat." The Bellows are formed by a deep chasm on the coast of Asparagus Island, near the Lizard in west Cornwall; and the Throat is not far distant. There is also a Devil's Bellows on the coast road from Lyme Regis to Bridport.

The Devil's Dyke lies five miles to the north-west of Brighton; it is an immense cleft in the South Downs, near Poynings, west Sussex, roughly oval in shape and about a mile round, some 700 feet above the sea-level. Here Satan once tried to dig a huge canal which he was going to fill with water so as to be able to submerge all the churches. But he was discovered at his nefarious work by an old woman whose good fairy put an ingenious idea into her head. She lit her lamp and pulled aside the curtain, and thus deceived the Devil into thinking that it was already day-break and he had to withdraw to his own realms of darkness. And then, on all sides, derisive laughter broke out when it got about that he had been taken in by a simple old woman, and so he gave up his project in disgust.

When Satan wearies of his shameful activities, there are various places where he is wont to rest for a while.

The Devil's Chair is the name given to a rock six feet long and three feet high, at Petit Plemont in the Channel Islands. The rock has been worn away so as to leave a canopy six inches thick.

On the Abbot's Way, between Totnes and Plymouth, in Devonshire, Satan is said to hunt at night with his baying hounds. The oldest inhabitants will tell hair-raising tales of the brutal recklessness with which the Lord of the Underworld sweeps through the countryside as he rides abroad.

The Devil celebrated his wedding at Stanton Drew in north Somerset, on the River Chew, not far from the highway from Bristol to Wells. As is scarcely surprising, he commemorated this festive occasion by turning his wedding-guests into stones, and here one sees them not far from the church, some in circles of 14 or 6, and others left standing anyhow. And in ancient days the Devil used to practise archery for his amusement. Four of the shafts were forgotten and left standing about half a mile south of Boroughbridge, in Yorkshire, at distances of about 250 to 300 feet apart. The ancient Britons used them as milestones, which somewhat displeased his Satanic majesty, and he decided to fetch his arrows back to the underworld, but succeeded in recovering only

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one of them. The other three, which measure 18, 22 and 31 feet in height, were used by the Romans as winning-posts in their chariot races.

In Ireland one finds the Devil's Bit Mountains, which reach a height of 1,583 feet. They get their name from the irregular gap, or "bit" which their contours show when seen from some angles. Legend avers that the Devil bit a piece out of the mountain and spat it out at Killarney where it forms the "Devil's Island" in the lake. Mountaineers in this district who happen to be out after nightfall in stormy weather report that they hear the strangest noises up in these mountains. These are the sounds with which Satan hopes to lure unwary souls into his grasp as they pass the gap.

Even the Devil likes his cup of tea in England, and two of the vessels in which he brews it have been found.

The first is the Devil's Cauldron which stands on Kilchattan Bay, in Scotland. It measures 30 feet in diameter, is seven and a half feet high, and is made of stone 10 feet thick. Not far from it there stands a chapel and it is said that while he was waiting outside for the sinners to finish their almost interminable prayers, the Devil decided to fortify himself with a nice hot cup of tea. This chapel for a long time was regarded as the special resort of penitents. The other Cauldron is also in Scotland and is formed by a chasm through which the Lednock flows amidst the wildest scenery. The turbulent waters, hurling themselves against the rock, have worn them away into the form of the cauldron.

The Devil's Cave is a cavern in Kincraig Hill, Fifeshire, three miles south-west of Colinsburgh. The Devil's Causeway was used by the Romans as their highway, where it branches north of the Roman Wall a little to the south-west of Whittington, Northumberland. The track leads through Kirk Eaton, Bolam, Hartburn, Netherwitton and Long Horlsey all the way to Framlington.

The Romans were very clever at converting the Devil's handiwork to their own advantage. They also used the Devil's Highway. It is 90 feet wide and leads across Bagshot Heath in south-east Berkshire and it served the Romans as their main road from Silchester to London.

The Devil's Hole—also known as the "Creux du Vis"—in the north of Jersey, Channel Islands, is a ravine on the coast near Ronez Point. The Devil's Ditch once formed the boundary between East Anglia and Mercia. It runs north-west from Ditton Wood to the Fens at Reach, across Newmarket Heath in Cambridgeshire.

It really is remarkable how the Devil has left his handiwork, and even more his name, all over Britain. And of course he has his own flight of steps, the Devil's Staircase, a rocky track which

leads from the top of Glencoe to Kinlochmore, at the head of Loch Lomond. From here, an ancient path goes to Loch Leven. There are still a few people living in the neighbourhood who claim to have heard from the lips of their great-grandfathers, that their great-grandfathers' great-grandfathers saw the Devil, usually on Sundays, when it was time to go to church, astride his black horse with flaming nostrils, riding like a hurricane up the steps. Really and truly!

To slake his thirst, the Devil has a spring of Devil's Water, which empties itself into the Tyne.

The Devil's Jumps are a series of mounds in west Surrey, not far from Frensham Ponds. As is only fitting and proper, the Devil had his Limekiln in British soil; he chose for its site a spot at the south-west point of Lundy, on the Bristol Channel, and here you can see it—a chasm 350 feet deep. From it, two tunnels branch out, connecting it with the sea. The Devil's Point is a frightful precipice in the Cairngorm Mountains, Scotland; the Devil's Pit, however, is in west Cornwall, near Cadgwith; it is a hollow covering two acres and 200 feet deep.

Now that we have seen how widespread are the encroachments which the Devil has made within the borders of Great Britain, we can hardly wonder at the report that he even ventures to filch the livelihood from honest craftsmen. No, indeed. He has his own Devil's Mill, on the border of Perthshire and Kinross-shire. He placed it by the falls of the Devon, where the stream swirls in a broad stream through a mountain gorge and pours itself into a rocky basin. If you go by night and stand near the river, you can hear the Devil quite plainly working his mill. And here we may leave Satan and his underworld and turn our attention to even weirder things—ghosts.

On this subject a large number of excellent books have been written, and it is no longer regarded as curious that a bibliophile should devote himself to collecting ghost literature. For those who like making sure of the "facts" and yet believe—or would like to believe—in ghosts, C. G. Harper's book, "*Haunted Houses*," illustrated by the author, will provide the most matter-of-fact accounts of ghosts. He has given his book the sub-title of "*Tales of the Supernatural with some account of Hereditary Curses and Family Legends*."

A similar, though perhaps not quite so exhaustive work, with a very similar title—"The Haunted Homes and Family Traditions of Great Britain" was written by the "ghostologist" John H. Ingram (published by Reeves & Turner, London). Some very exciting adventures have also been collected by Elliot O'Donnell, under the reassuring title of "*Twenty Years' Experience as a Ghost-hunter*" (published by Heath Cranton, London). Some of the collections



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of ghost stories, such as "*Haunted Places in England*," should, in the interests of untroubled dreams, not be chosen as bed-side books. But those who are on the look-out for curiosities and have managed to get through the foregoing catalogues of the Devil's tricks and antics without any shock to their nerves, may read happily on to the end of this chapter, without being frightened of being frightened.

Irish ghost stories were the speciality of St. John D. Seymour and Harry L. Neligan, whose book on "*True Irish Ghost Stories*" was published in Dublin by Hodges, Figgis & Co., and in London by Humphrey Milford. A single ghost story seems to have absorbed the interest of A. P. Baker, who published through W. Heffer & Sons, "*A College Mystery, the Story of the Apparition in the Fellows' Garden at Christ's College, Cambridge*." But he did the job very thoroughly, and for the edification of those who are inclined to be sceptical about the truth of his statements, provided photographs of the apparition which must finally dispose of any doubts which his convincing narrative may have left in his readers' minds.

For those who enjoy either direct experiences, or well-told stories of the adventures of others in the domain of the ghostly, one may also recommend "*Nine Authentic Ghost Stories of the Century*," published in 1886 by John Menzies & Co., Edinburgh & Glasgow. For the London Publishing Company, "Cheiro" collected "*True Ghost Stories*." Wilfred Rex Sowden tells about "*Ghosts Seen and Heard*" (published by Arthur H. Stockwell) and a critical treatment of the subject, by Camille Flammarion has been published by T. Fisher Unwin, London, under the title, "*Haunted Houses*." But perhaps the most engrossing of all such books is the compilation, made by S. Louis Girard of the "*True Ghost Stories, told by readers of the Daily News*." In this volume are reprinted the accounts given by ordinary readers of the paper of their encounters with ghosts, and they often have a finish and vividness which they owe to the primitive directness so often lacking in the writing of the "professional" ghost-story writer. What strikes one most, perhaps, in this book is the great variety of the contributions, proving how widespread is the concern of people in Great Britain with this fascinating subject.

And now it is time for us to make a hurried tour of these haunted places. Are you ready? Then let us begin.

At Sampford-Peverell, in Devonshire, for three years, from 1810 to 1813, a mischievous spirit was busy in the house of Mr. Chave. In this little village on the highroad between Taunton and Tiverton there were strange goings-on. At night all sorts of things flew through the rooms of this house, and try as one might, it was impossible to find any vestige of a reason for the strange phenomenon. The unhappy Mr. Chave offered a reward of £250 for

the discovery of this ghost, or, better still, for laying it, since he was convinced that what happened was due to a "poltergeist." This prize drew hosts of inquisitive idlers and also ghost-hunters from all corners of the country and indeed even from as far away as the Balkans detectives, scientific investigators and conjurors foregathered; but the spook took no heed of any of them.

No sooner had one of his sleuths left a room than he gaily let fling again. And sometimes he would pinch them in all possible parts of their anatomy.

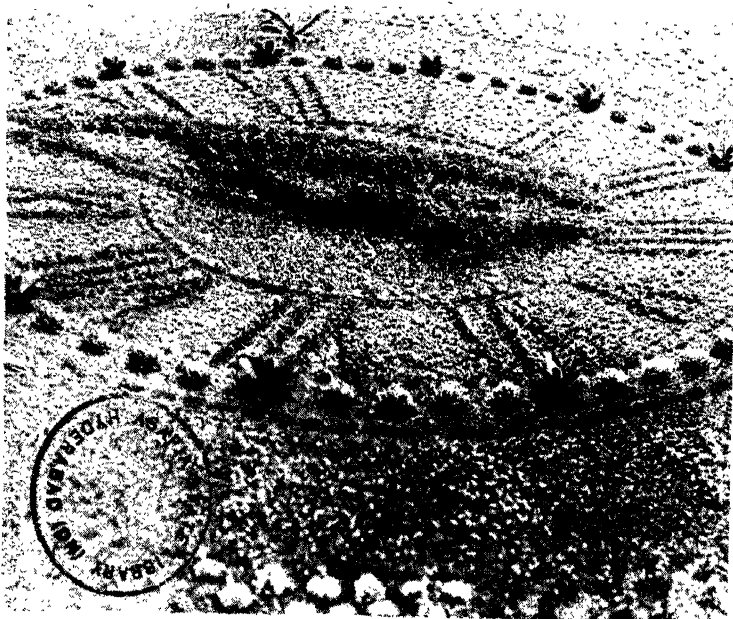
Towards the end of the 17th century another ghost plagued the inhabitants of the village of Spreyton, which lies between the rivers Teign and Taw, near Okehampton, also in Devonshire. In the year 1683 a book which was published in London created a great sensation, and this gave an account of the phenomena in question. It was the "*Letter from a Person of Quality in the County of Devon, to a Gentleman in London: A Narrative of the Demon of Spreyton.*" But even this epistle from a "Person of Quality" failed to impress the spook in question so deeply as to put him to flight.

At Ripley Castle, Yorkshire, on specified occasions, a nun steps out of the frame of her picture and wanders through the rooms of the castle. This apparition forebodes the death of those to whom she appears.

The fine old moated manor-house of Baddesley Clinton near Warwick is a perfect setting for a ghost. It has secret passages and hiding holes, and an authentic murder legend. Way back in the 15th century the manor belonged to a certain Nicholas Brome, a hot-tempered member of a quarrelsome family. His father had been killed in a quarrel, and Nicholas had slain the murderer. Presently he lost his temper again. Coming home unexpectedly he discovered his domestic chaplain chucking his wife under the chin, and forthwith drew his sword and instantly killed the unfaithful priest. The ghosts of both murderer and victim are said to haunt this grand old pile. But the most famous of haunted houses with an authentic murder story, is Littlecote, about two miles from Hungerford. During part of the 16th century, this fine old house belonged to a certain Will Darrell, who held an unholy reputation in the neighbourhood. Mrs. Barnes, a midwife of Shefford, was called from her home at midnight, placed on a horse and blindfolded; she was then taken into a bedroom, where a mysterious masked lady was needing her services. When the child had been delivered, the door burst open, and a tall man masked and robed in black strode to the bedside, seized the infant, and flung it upon the blazing log fire until the little body was entirely consumed. The midwife was then blindfolded once more, and taken home, with a warning that if she spoke of the matter she would be



XLV. PACKHORSE BRIDGE, ALLERFORD, SOMERSET



XLVI. FLORAL CLOCK, PRINCES STREET, EDINBURGH

accorded to most of the dead, but are condemned to haunt the stove and utensils which they misused in life.

Ham House, between Richmond and Kingston, a beautiful palace which was built for James I in 1610, is haunted by the Prince Henry, Prince of Wales, who died of typhoid fever in 1612. But, young as he was, the Prince seems to have found life too pleasant to give up and, so they tell, used to beg and implore those around him, even in his delirious dreams, to deliver him from the throttling claws of death. There is, however, some doubt as to whether it really is the Prince of Wales' ghost that walks here. Some maintain that it is that of the famous Elizabeth, Countess of Dysart, who is supposed to have murdered her first husband, Sir Lionel Tollemache, here in the year 1669. Historians refute this allegation, demonstrating that the Countess could not have committed the crime, as she was in Paris, and Sir Lionel in London, when he died.

It really gives one a creepy feeling to read in the "*Athenaeum*" of 1879 the authentic story of the famous Rev. Dr. Jessop. Returning one evening from his duties among his parishioners to his home at Mannington Hall, in Norfolk, he found a stranger seated by the fire. Immediate Jessop recognised, from the remarkable appearance of the stranger, that this was no living being, but a ghost, who moreover bore a strong resemblance to Velasquez's "*Dead Knight*." But he engaged the apparition in conversation and, to be sure, a well educated ghost he was, too. After this one occasion he never appeared again though this one visitation served to stamp Mannington Hall as a haunted house.

John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, whose various associations in England are mentioned in the chapter on America, often used to tell how his family, and himself, were plagued by the Epworth ghost. The story is told by Richard Southey, in his biography, "*The Life of Wesley*."

There are many clergymen who seriously believe in ghosts. Samuel Wilberforce, Bishop of Winchester bears out this statement in his memoirs on the activities of the "*Phantom Monk*." Furthermore, the present Bishop of Portsmouth, the Rt. Rev. Dr. Ernest Nevill Lovett, as he reported in English papers in the current year (1937), saw with his own eyes, while he was sitting at his devotions in St. Thomas's Church, Portsmouth, in the year 1927, the ghost of Thomas Becket, who was martyred at Canterbury.

There are also ghosts of living people!

For in 1908 the phantom of the Rev. Dr. Astley was seen in his study at the East Rudham Vicarage in Norfolk. He was sitting at his desk in his favourite attitude, reading the "*Times*." In actual fact at that particular time he was in Algeria. Of course they followed up the hardly credible statements of the various servants

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in the house who had seen their master—or rather, their master's ghost—at his writing table. Even the matter-of-fact and enlightened sceptics who came to investigate saw the apparition of this spiritual man. And they, like everybody else, were at a loss for an explanation. When the Rev. Dr. Astley came home and was told about his ghost, he had a bad nervous breakdown.

The modest little churchyard at Croglin (Cumberland) boasts one of the most thrilling, gruesome, and impossible of all our ghost stories, though vouched for as fact by Mr. Augustus Hare in his "*Story of my Life*."

The narrative is really a Balkan Vampire legend transferred to a peaceful English village. A vampire is a body, which, its owner having died under the ban of the Church, can be entered after death by an evil spirit. It lives on *human blood*, and wanders about after dark seeking whom it may devour, returning to the tomb before daylight. According to Mr. Hare's story a frightful corpse-like creature, brown, shrivelled, and mummified in form, with dreadful glaring eyes, broke through the window of a ground floor bedroom, and bit a young lady in the throat, inflicting a frightful wound, but was driven off before it could do mortal harm. The creature was never found, and the lady—after a long illness, and a trip abroad—returned to the Grange. Her room was now protected by wooden shutters, and when the creature returned it was unable to enter, and was chased by the men of the house to the churchyard, where it disappeared. During the pursuit it was shot in the leg, but managed to escape. Next day the vampire was found in a coffin, with *marks of the bullet in its leg!*

The vile body was burned to ashes, and the vampire was laid. It should be stated that there is no "Grange" at Croglin, and no house in the village fits the description in the story. There is only one churchyard however, and if we can believe the story, this is where it all happened!

Creslow Manor House is now a farm, but still retains an embattled tower dating from the 14th century. The Manor is about a mile from the village of Whitchurch (near Aylesbury). It is now nearly a hundred years since the ghost appeared, which has made this old house famous. Unlike most spooks, the Creslow wraith is *heard* but never *seen*. She moves about the haunted room, with a loud rustling, as of an old fashioned stiff silk dress, but no one has ever seen her.

The last person to hear her was a former sheriff of the county, who slept in the haunted room, and made repeated attempts to seize the "dark lady" but without success.

Southcote House was an old moated manor near Reading. It was long reputed haunted by a white lady who crossed the moat on horseback at midnight. Tradition says that she had loved not

wisely but too well and was found drowned in the moat. The house was pulled down about 10 years ago but the moat remains.

"The White Lady" is Agnes de Rushbrooke, who was thrown into the water of the moat by her irate husband. Since then her moaning ghost has haunted Rushbrooke Hall, near Bury St. Edmunds.

"The Brown Lady" is to be seen rushing through Raynham Hall, a magnificent mansion near Falkenham, in Norfolk, when the death of one of the Townshend family, who now live there, is imminent. She is the ghost of Dorothy, wife of the second Viscount Townshend, and sister of Sir Robert Walpole.

At Felbrigg, in Norfolk, the statesman William Windham had his home. Since his death his ghost has come back every night to the library, where it sits reading his favourite books.

For a long time No. 50, Berkeley Square, London, was believed to be haunted. At the pressing request of the sorely troubled landlord, who lost a lot of money through this rumour, the estate agents secured irreputable evidence, from a reliable ghost expert and from a still more reliable scientific investigator, that all allegations to the effect that the house was ghost-ridden—at least at the present day—are quite unfounded.

Another bewitched house in London is the famous Walpole House at Chiswick, once the residence of Barbara Villiers-Palmer, Duchess of Cleveland, mistress of Charles II. This lady, who in her younger days was famed and feted for her beauty, died at the age of 69; and on her deathbed her last words were:

"Give me back my lost beauty!"

Her ghost is said to walk the house, still uttering these very words.

There is a great deal of the ghostly about Ballechin House at Logierat in Perthshire. The inexplicable other-worldly things that have happened there have been written down in a book: "*The Alleged Haunting of Ballechin House.*" Since the 16th century this has been in the possession of the Stewart family. Until 1896 every night there was an ear-splitting din, with explosions in all the stoves and fireplaces. Flying dogs would suddenly appear in the air. At even the quietest family celebration, "Ishbel" and "Margaharaed," two portraits in oils, would come to life and step shrieking from their picture-frames to join in the conversation. And these phenomena were reported by those who were by no means superstitious or unenlightened. Scientific investigators and detectives were imported to find explanations for the strange happenings; but even these clever, logically-minded men were at a loss to clear the matter up. Peace has now been restored and nothing has been heard of late.

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At Talland, near Looe, on the coast of south-east Cornwall, a spectre-coach may be seen rushing through the night. The churchyard was said to be haunted by devils, in fact smugglers used the place.

At Great Bayhall Manor House, near Pembury Green in Kent, there was a nice to-do. In the year 1803 Mrs. Ann West died here at the age of 34.

Once before she had been all but buried alive. Having once had a near shave and fearing that it might happen again that she was taken for dead and put in her coffin too soon, she sent for the undertaker and had some sort of safety signal fitted into her coffin. Well, in 1803 she really did die, but for all that, at midnight every night she rang her signal bell to the alarm of the cemetery keeper, who, however, so they say, used to let her out to prowls round her native village for a few hours during the night. The tomb has a grating in it, and she was buried in an open coffin. The Manor was said to be haunted by the deceased, terrible noises were heard by crowds of people who visited the place at night. Finally it fell to ruin and to-day is a perfect picture of a haunted house.

Luck talismans and unlucky charms are very common in Britain.

Dahlem Hall, near Newmarket, is known to the country folk round about as a house of ill luck. It was bought by Cecil Rhodes who moved in only to die shortly afterwards in the prime of his life, at the age of 49.

In 1905 his brother Colonel Frank Rhodes, came to live at the house, but he too was carried off by death three years later.

Then a third brother, Captain Ernest Frederick Rhodes, was hardy enough to move in: he too closed his eyes for the last time only two years later.

Nearly every district boasts some lucky mascot. A famous one, an agate cup, was the "luck" of Workington Hall, in Cumberland. Mary Queen of Scots gave this cup to Sir Henry Curwen as a memento after the Battle of Langside, and prophesied that his family would never have ill fortune so long as her gift remained in their possession. The Queen's talisman is still carefully preserved as a family heirloom.

After his defeat at the Battle of Hexham in the year 1463, King Henry VI presented to Sir John Pennington, who gave him hospitality at his home, Muncaster Castle, in Cumberland, a 15th century Venetian glass bowl, which was to bring happiness and luck. This is recorded on Sir John's grave as follows:

"King Harry gave Syr John a brauve workyd glasse cuppe with his word before yat whyllys the famylie shold keep it unbrecken thei shold gretely thrif, and never lack a male heir."

His descendants became Barons of Muncaster and the bowl remained with them as a cherished family possession. In the Castle

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to-day the King's Room is still preserved as it was, with the bedstead in which he slept. But the direct line has now died out, and the "Luck" of Muncaster has passed into the safe-keeping of a collateral.

At Burrell Green, in Cumberland, there is a table which has been carefully preserved and which is inscribed :

"If this dish be sold or giv'n  
Farewell the luck of Burrell Green."

But the most famous of all British luck talismans is beyond a doubt the "Luck" of Edenhall. Eden Hall, in Cumberland, is the seat of the Musgrave family and the mansion was rebuilt in its present form in 1824. It contains a priceless collection, made by former baronets, of pictures by Reynolds, Lely and Kneller. But the most precious of all the art treasures there was the ancient enamelled goblet, "The Luck of Edenhall," a unique specimen of Oriental craftsmanship.

One of the castle servants let the goblet fall in the park, and the fairies called to him, saying :

"If that glass either break or fall  
Farewell to the Luck of Eden Hall!"

In the year 1927 the 13th Baronet, whose family had lived there since the time of Henry VI put up the castle for auction, but the famous "Luck" or as much as remained of it, was presented to the Victoria and Albert Museum in London.

The story of this treasure of the Musgrave family is given in the poetical works and translations of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.



## CHAPTER IX

### ROMANTIC CURIOSITIES

THE literature of the world knows of no more famous gate than the Wishing Gate at Grasmere, by the side of the old highway to Ambleside, in Westmorland. It is true that there are many such gates in Britain, but this one has for long attracted people from the furthest corners of the earth. Tradition attributes to it the power of fulfilling the desires of those who touch it three times while at the same time expressing their wishes! It inspired William Wordsworth to write his well-known poem "*The Wishing Gate*."

In the year 1842, news came to Wordsworth that his beloved gate had been torn off its hinges. Sorrowfully he took up his pen and wrote further stanzas, beginning :

"'Tis gone—with old belief and dream  
That round it clung, and tempting scheme  
Released the bright landscape too must lie,  
By this blank wall, from every eye,  
Relentlessly shut out.

But it was not long before the poet had occasion to make the following observation :

"Having been told, upon what I thought good authority, that this gate had been destroyed, and the opening where it hung walled up, I gave vent immediately to my feelings in these stanzas. But going to the place some time after, I found, with much delight, my old favourite unmolested. W."

It is, then, not only for human beings that epitaphs have been written prematurely: the Wishing Gate still hangs proudly in its idyllic surroundings, and has long outlived its learned admirer, as it will outlive him who is writing these lines.

Nowadays it is chiefly lovers who come to see, and to wish at this gate, and they are emphatic in their praises of its unfailing efficacy.

On the Island of Guernsey, Channel Islands, is a much frequented Wishing Well. It stands at the top of the path down to Moulin Hut Bay. Here one drops a pin into the Well to secure one's wish.

There is a flight of Wishing Steps leading down from the Walls at Chester, but their benign influence is not so easily enlisted.

The "applicant" must pronounce his or her wish while standing on the lowest step, and then run twice up and down the stairway, without once taking breath, in order to win over the presiding genius. There is no recorded instance of anyone having successfully fulfilled the conditions for securing their heart's desire here. Even the stoutest lungs find that they must be refilled once, twice, thrice and even more often before the charm is completed.

In the Prior's study, at Finchdale Priory, near Durham, on the sill of the oriel window, one may see the outlines of a foot and an open hand, graven in the projecting slab of stone.

No-one can tell the story of how these impressions came to be made, but it is well known by all the common folk for miles around that childless women come in their thousands to this "Wishing Stone." In order to secure its benediction, the appellant must climb up on to the stone and take up the not very comfortable position in which the left foot and the right hand are placed each in the corresponding depression in the window sill. While in this position, bent almost double, she must recite her wish. Then she may climb down and go home, with the reassuring knowledge that in many cases, as the chronicles record, those who have fulfilled this back-breaking rite, have been blessed afterwards with offspring.

Another wonder-working stone, especially patronised by lovers, is to be found in the wall of the Castle at Blarney, four miles north-west of Cork, in Ireland. This is the celebrated Blarney Stone. Here too a certain amount of physical contortion is necessary in order to perform the rite, since the stone is set in the outside of the wall. Its efficacy is invoked by young men as well as by maidens. Whoever kisses this stone, and recites his or her wishes at the same time, becomes endowed with "marvellous powers of persuasion and cajolery" over his or her beloved.

Incidentally, for some years past, this resort of luckless lovers has been fenced off with a double iron paling, as the hordes of pilgrims became a nuisance to the owners of the Castle. But the stream of those who come continues unabated, and, furthermore, undeterred by the fact that in order to reach the stone and kiss it—the essential part of the rite—one hangs, head downwards, clutching a rail with one's hands, suspended between the parapet and the battlements, with a sheer drop below. Those prone to giddiness do well to bring with them a friend who will hold their ankles fast while they wriggle into the uncomfortable posture which brings their face up level with the outside of the battlement, where the precious stone is situated.

It is said that there have been many accidents during the performance of this tricky manoeuvre. But, to be sure, what would any lover not dare in order to secure these "marvellous powers of persuasion and cajolery" over the beloved one!

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In the pretty seaport town of Gourock, 25 miles west of Glasgow, in Renfrewshire, Scotland, there is another spot much frequented by those suffering the pangs of unrequited love. Here, by a wall, there is a mighty monolith which has stood there since time immemorial. It is known as "Granny Kempock." Its benign influence was first invoked during times of storm at sea by sailors who would dance round it, with hymns and supplications for fairer weather. As time went on, this stone gained the reputation of securing the fulfilment of wishes for those who thus appealed for its aid, and so it came to be the haunt of men and maidens who were sad or in difficulties, and here they would gain new courage and hope. Many a stranger, coming unawares on some young man or woman dancing round this stone, with unintelligible incantations, would flee, terror-stricken, from the spot, thinking to have stumbled on some sinister ritual.

Not far from Downton, in Shropshire, are the Crawl Meadows. According to local tradition, they perpetuate the memory of the unconquerable love of a young maiden from the neighbouring village of Bromfield for a youth who hailed from Downton. Her father refused to give his consent to their marriage. "I will do anything you ask, father," said the girl, "if only you will give your consent."

"If you will crawl on the ground to him," said her heartless father, "then you can have him for your husband."

And so she crawled away—for a whole day and half a night—until, hungry, exhausted and half fainting, she reached these meadows; but she was still firm in her resolve to reach her beloved. And then her father, seeing that it was unavailing to stand out against the force of so passionate a devotion, relented and gave his consent to the marriage.

In Kent, in the rural district of Blean, one may find Love Street. All sorts of stories are told to account for this name, and widely as they differ, they all agree in promising a happy future for all those who plight their troth in this thoroughfare.

But it is a sad story which is told to account for the name, Lovesgrove, in Cardiganshire. Near here, so they tell, in bygone days, a beautiful woman was abducted, after a frantic struggle, by an audacious knight. As they came to this spot, she fell from her horse, dead, into the arms of her own true love.

And what did the knight of that romantic age do? He thrust the blade of his dagger into his own heart. And thus in death he was united with the lady of his choice, and buried beside her, at Lovesgrove. But you may search in vain for a trace of their graves: only their memory survives, enshrined in the name.

It would be no light task to retell all the more or less exciting stories that have been told to account for the origin of the place-

name, Lovers' Leap. They would, in fact, fill a fair-sized—and by no means dull—volume.

There are, altogether, four places which bear this name in Britain.

i Near Pleinmont, the most westerly point of the Channel Islands.

ii A lofty rock near the beautiful Ashwood Dale, two miles east of Buxton on the Wye in Derbyshire.

iii On the Dart, two and a half miles north-west of the market town of Ashburton, in Devonshire, and

iv A crag, near Powerscourt, in Ireland, from which there is an enchantingly beautiful view over Dargle Glen.

Near the Royal Cavern, on the Derwent, in the romantic spa of Matlock in Derbyshire, there is a sort of promenade which is known as Lovers' Walk. If a young man wished to declare his love to a maiden, he took her here for a walk. But he must speak no single word on the way. At the end of the walk, if she wished to accept his wooing, she must put up her lips to be kissed. And even to-day, one may surprise a couple kissing at the end of this Lovers' Walk; for this is still the El Dorado of the diffident.

This method of proposing to a girl was a godsend for bashful, tongue-tied lovers. And so this place has come to be a favourite haunt of young couples from the neighbourhood. When a young man invited a girl to go there on an excursion, tongues in the family began to wag. When "he" takes the lady of his choice to Lovers' Walk, then it is time for "her" mother to start thinking about getting the trousseau ready.

Near Fairlight Glen, in Sussex, on a ledge of rock a little below the cliff's edge, is the "Lovers' Seat." It is described in the Handbook of Hastings, as follows :

"The name is connected with the stolen meetings (1800) between a young lady, Miss Boys, of Elford, near Hawkhurst, and her lover, a Lieutenant Lamb, related to the Rye family of that name. Miss Boys being superior in fortune and station to Lieutenant Lamb, her parents disapproved of their engagement, but she being at Fairlight, then a farmhouse, for her health, and he being in command of the revenue cutter cruising about the coast, they continued to arrange meetings on this spot, and ultimately to elope together. They were married, obtained her parents' forgiveness, and lived at Higham, in the parish of Salthurst. Lieutenant Lamb was drowned some years after in Southampton Water."

"Graitney, Dumfriesshire, is a parish and village in the south part of the country Scotland, small debt court district of Dumfries and Annan, and poor combination of Kirkpatrick-Fleming, and on the west side of the small river Sark."

## ROMANTIC CURIOSITIES

It will scarcely occur to those who happen to read these words in Kelly's Directory of Scotland that they apply to one of the most famous spots in the whole wide world. Until just recently it has been, for centuries, the earnestly longed-for goal of all lovers kept apart by unsympathetic parents.

The entry continues: "The village of Graitney is on the road from Annan to Carlisle, eight miles east from the former and nine and a half from the latter town. The river Esk, which flows to the south, discharging itself into the Solway Firth, is now spanned by a concrete bridge . . ."

Have you guessed yet?

"... An extensive salmon fishing is carried on in the Solway . . ."

Do you give it up? It's Gretna Green, also called Graitney.

Gretna Green! The first village across the border, where one can get married without all the tiresome preliminaries and ceremonies which English law requires.

Poems, novels, plays have been written about this little hamlet on the Border. All manner of betrothed couples who have encountered difficulties have dashed off, frequently pursued by their outraged parents, to this sanctuary, and have plighted their troth over the blacksmith's anvil. It is recorded that thousands of couples, about 150 every year, have chosen this precipitate—and but recently interdicted—means of leaping into matrimony.

The romantic history of the place has been written by Richard P. MacDougall in his books: "*The Gretna Blacksmith's Story*" and "*Romances of Gretna Green*," and none other than Hugh Mackie, the proprietor of the blacksmith's shop, acted as publisher and had the book printed.

In 1797 John Peel was married here; also Tom Hearne, "The Lazy Juggler"; here Jan van Albert, the famous Dutch giant, crept under the yoke of matrimony. In the old records—unfortunately partly destroyed by fire—one finds the names of people of all European nationalities. The Visitors' Book, which served as marriage register, is inscribed with the names of sultans, poets, actors and so forth. During the war (1917) King George V and Queen Mary visited the blacksmith's shop, and David Lloyd George also figures among the list of distinguished visitors to this unique showplace.

But to-day Gretna Green has reverted to the status of a small, peaceful hamlet. For years there were agitations—led by leading personalities in parliament and elsewhere—in favour of declaring this hasty and uncereemonious form of marriage as invalid and now, in 1937, they have gained the day, and the glamour and romance of this little border village have departed for ever.

The marriage fees varied, according to the social status of the contracting parties, from five to 50 guineas. It may perhaps be of

# 1,000 CURIOSITIES OF BRITAIN

interest to give here the form of certificate granted after the marriage :

Kingdom of Scotland  
County of Dumfries  
Parish of Gretna.

These are to Certify to all whom they may concern :

That .....  
from the Parish of .....  
in the County of .....  
and .....  
from the Parish of .....  
in the county of .....  
being now both here present, and having declared to me that they  
are Single Persons, have now been Married after the manner of  
the Laws of Scotland : As witness our hands at Gretna, this .....  
..... day of .....  
Parties.....  
Witnesses.....  
Priest.....

The stage—or should one say altar?—was always set and all that had to be done was to enter the smithy, to pay, to sign and to say “Yes.”

Oh, gallop along with a right merry song,  
Through wood and vale and hollow,  
The turnpike men may shake their heads,  
And half the world may follow ;  
But I care not what the old folks say,  
I'll take no heed or warning,  
For I'll be wearing a wedding ring  
At Gretna-Green in the morning.

## CHAPTER X

### CURIOUS INNS

THOSE who are attracted by the idea of a leisurely tour of the most amusing and picturesque inns of Great Britain would be well advised to consult the two leading authorities on the subject, A. E. Richardson's two volumes, "*The English Inn Past and Present*" and "*The Old Inns of England*" (both published by Batsford), and Thomas Burke's "*The Book of the Inn*" (Constable) and "*The British Inn*" (Longmans, Green & Co.) give full information on the subject.

This book is concerned only with "curiosities" and I have therefore chosen only the most curious inns from among a large variety of interesting and attractive examples.

Most curious of all is the fact that among the inns of Britain there rages a silent, but by no means dispassionate war, on the burning question as to which of them is entitled to claim the distinction of being "the oldest inn."

No less than a score of contestants have entered the lists, each of them armed with overwhelming proof of their right to the coveted title.

Therefore though I venture to enumerate all the "oldest inns" in Great Britain, I am taking the precaution here and now of apologising in advance to any such which I may unintentionally have overlooked in my survey.

The first of these "very oldest" inns is the Fountain Inn, at Canterbury. Here the wife of Earl Godwin came to welcome her spouse on his return home from Denmark.

This meeting must have taken place as early as the year 1029, a circumstance upon which the whole of the rest of the international innkeeping industry casts an envious look, since it establishes the claim of the inn to be all but a thousand years of age.

Furthermore, in December, 1170, in the rooms of this very inn, the four noble knights who had sworn to serve their royal master by murdering the prelate-statesman Thomas Becket, met to discuss the details of their horrible deed.

And when, in the year 1299, King Edward, with all due pomp and circumstance, celebrated his marriage to Margaret of France, the German Ambassador put up at the Fountain Inn.

In his journal, which is still extant, he made the following entry :

"The inns in Canterbury are the best in England, and the Fountain, where I am now lodged as handsomely as if I were in the King's Palace, the best in Canterbury."

This tribute is not only a model of cogent publicity, even judged by to-day's standards, but is actually the oldest innkeeper's testimonial in Britain, if not in the whole world.

The next claimant to the title of "the oldest inn in England" is the Olde Bell, Finedon, near Kettering. A large notice displayed in one of the rooms proclaims triumphantly : "The Oldest Licensed House in England. Founded 1042." It is said to have once been the property of the Saxon Queen Editha, whose effigy adorns the facade.

The Old Fighting Cocks at St. Albans, Hertfordshire, readily admits that, as inns, others may well be older, but when it comes to the question of the oldest house which is now an inn, then this house claims to be the best candidate for that distinction.

It is a fact that this curious little octagonal building was built in the year 800, and although in its early days it was the Abbey Mill, it has been inhabited for more than eleven hundred years, without interruption.

Thus, in this sense, it is definitely the oldest dwelling-house in Britain. The inn itself was not opened until much later, in 1543, and so, being only something under four hundred years old, is a comparative newcomer to this company.

At The Ostrich at Colnbrook in Buckinghamshire, we will be given proof that we are staying in the oldest inn. There is a really exciting story about this inn, told by the novelist Thomas Deloney in his romance, "*Thomas of Reading*." The story is set in the days of Henry I, when the inn was known as The Crane.

As Henry I ascended the throne in the year 1100, we must admit that the Ostrich's claim is justified.

Should our travels take us to Grantham in Lincolnshire, at The Angel in the High Street they will do their best to convince us that here, and here only, we enjoy the privilege of standing in the earliest "licensed house" in Britain. Incidentally, Richard III slept in this beautiful building on the night of October 19th, 1483, after signing the death-warrant of the Duke of Buckingham.

In addition to those already mentioned, there are two other reputed "oldest inns": the Bull Hotel at Burford, and the Red Lion at Colchester, which was originally the St. George & Dragon.

Thomas Burke is somewhat bolder than I am : in his book he gives a definite list of inns in actual order of age. After those mentioned above, he cites the following :



## CURIOUS INNS

The Angel, Blyth, Nottinghamshire .....	1270
The George & Dragon, Speldhurst .....	1270
The Maid's Head, Norwich .....	1287
The Green Man, Erdington .....	1306
The George, Salisbury .....	1320
The Saracen's Head, Newark .....	1341
The Crown, Chiddingfold .....	1383
The George, Norton St. Philip .....	1397
The New Inn, Gloucester .....	1430
The Spread Eagle, Midhurst .....	1430
The King's Head, Aylesbury .....	1445
The Red Lion, Colchester .....	1470
The George, Glastonbury .....	1475
The Lion, Buckden .....	1477

The inn which stands highest in Britain is the Cat and Fiddle Inn, in Macclesfield Forest, Cheshire.

Not far from Land's End, at Sennen, is a hotel which is very appropriately named the "First and Last Hotel in England."

The most famous among the pilgrims' inns are to be found at Southwark, Gloucester, and at Glastonbury.

The first of these, the Tabard Inn, Southwark (now demolished) was selected by Geoffrey Chaucer as the starting point for the pilgrimage in his "Canterbury Tales," which opens as follows:

"Byfel that in that sesoun on a day  
In Southwark at the Tabard as I lay——"

The New Inn, Gloucester, was built in 1430 by the monk John Twynning, of Gloucester Abbey: and here lodging was provided for all the guests who came to do homage at the grave of the murdered King Edward II.

The George Hotel, Glastonbury, was formerly famous as The Pilgrim's Inn.

Abbot John de Selwood built this inn between 1470 and 1475 for the pilgrims who visited his Abbey. In the year 1539, the Abbot of Glastonbury, Richard Whiting, was hanged on Glastonbury Tor. Three hundred and fifty years later his innocence was established and he was then beatified.

Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn, when they had been out hunting, often visited The King's Head at Ampthill, in Bedfordshire. London also has its King's Head Inn and this too has associations—only indirectly however—with an English queen. The inn stands at the junction of Mark Lane and Fenchurch Street on the site where, in bygone days, the London Taverne stood; and it was here that Queen Elizabeth, on her release from the Tower in 1554, ate her first meal in freedom.

In 1651 the then Lord Derby slept the night before his execution

at the Man and Scythe Inn at the Church Gate in Bolton-le-Moors in Lancashire.

The first house to be rebuilt after the Great Fire of London in the year 1666 was Ye Olde Watling Restaurant, in Watling Street, London, E.C.4.

In a critical hour, when England's fate was in the balance, William of Orange gave an audience to an envoy from his ill-starred father-in-law, King James II, at The Bear Inn, Hungerford. Here, on December 8th, 1688, during that historic session of Parliament, petition for an armistice was brought to him.

Nelson gave a dinner for all the inhabitants of Burnham Thorpe, at the Nelson Inn in 1743, just before he assumed command of the *Agamemnon*.

Tea was first sold in England in the year 1657 at the well-known Garraway's Coffee-House, at 3, Change Alley, Cornhill, London, E.C.3. In those days it was hardly suitable for adoption as the national beverage, but enthusiasts in London gladly paid up to three guineas for a pound of the novelty.

There is one British inn which has been in the possession of one family for no less than four hundred years. This is The Horse Shoe Inn at Llanyblodwell in Shropshire. It has belonged all this time, without a break, to members of the Lloyd family, and is still under the same ownership.

At Dale, in Derbyshire, the Dale Abbey Church and the Blue Bell Inn share a building, but the inn is now a private house. And there is a place where—though admittedly it is only once a year, on Christmas Eve—divine service is held at an inn: this is at The Crispin Inn, in Windsor Forest, Berkshire.

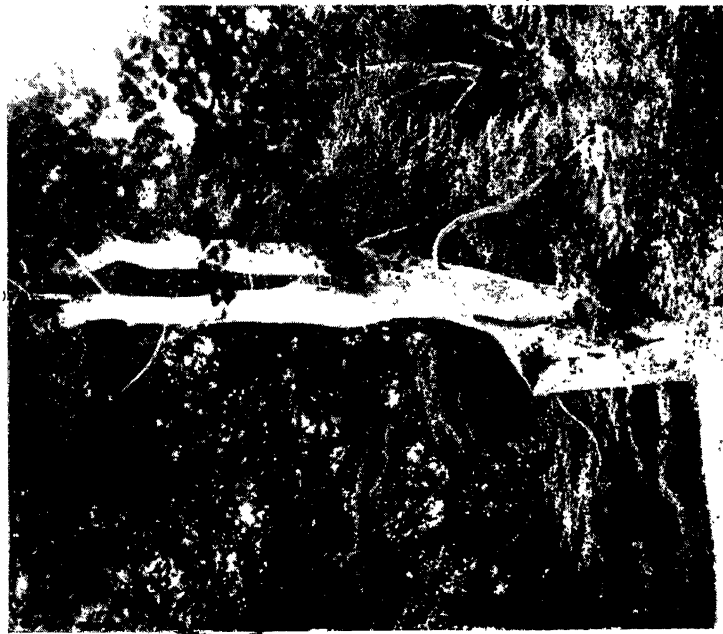
Many of the inns in Britain have become notable through their connection with poets, novelists, etc. Shakespeare himself was a constant visitor to the Ship Inn at Grendon Underwood. To-day this building is a private house, but the sign of the Ship is in Aylesbury Museum.

Every year, on September 18th, the birthday of the erudite Samuel Johnson, his admirers assemble for a banquet at the Three Crowns Inn, at Lichfield, in Staffordshire. It was here that the famous lexicographer regularly met his friend and collaborator, James Boswell.

Jonathan Swift lived at the Yacht Inn, Watergate Street, in Chester.

It was in a room at the Red Horse Hotel, Stratford-on-Avon, that the American writer, Washington Irving, wrote his "*Sketch Book of Geoffrey Crayon*," which has always been popular with English readers.

Walter Scott made his preliminary studies for the Waverley novel "*Kenilworth*" at the King's Arms Inn, Kenilworth.



XLIX. WISHING TREE, BERRY POMEROY, NR.  
TOTNES, DEVON



L. KING CHARLES' OAK, BOSCOBEL



LI. THE TOAD ROCK, TUNBRIDGE WELLS



LII. LION-FACED ROCK, DOVEDALE

## CURIOUS INNS

Of the Bridge Inn, at Burford, Robert Louis Stevenson wrote :  
"The inn at Burford Bridge with its arbours and green garden and silent, eddying river—though it is known already as the place where Keats wrote in 1815 some of his poem "*Endymion*," and Nelson parted from his Emma—still seems to wait the coming of the appropriate legend. Within these ivied walls, behind these old green shutters some further business smoulders, waiting for its hour."

Daniel Defoe wrote the latter part of his masterpiece, "*Robinson Crusoe*," at the Rose and Crown Inn in Black Lane, Halifax.

The Maypole Inn, mentioned in Dickens' "*Barnaby Rudge*," is to be identified with the King's Head Inn at Chigwell, Essex. The Leather Bottle Inn at Cobham, near Rochester in Kent, has been immortalised through the *Pickwick Papers*. Another inn out of many referred to in this book is the Angel Hotel at Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk.

The starting-point of the Pickwick Club's drive to Rochester is the Golden Cross Hotel, in the Strand, London, now demolished. Dickens himself was a *habitué* of The Boot, Cromer Street, near King's Cross Station, London, where we are still shown his favourite chair. He spent the last thirteen years of his life at the Gadshill Place Inn, near Rochester.

Shenstone wrote his well-known stanzas, "*Written in an inn at Henley*" at the Red Lion Hotel, Henley-on-Thames.

On one of the doorposts of the inn of The Four Crosses in Watling Street, Cannock, in Staffordshire, a Latin couplet is inscribed; it reads:

"FLERES, SI SCIERES UNUM TUA TEMPORA MENSEM  
RIDES, CUM NON SIT FORSITAN UNA DIES"

which may be translated into English as "You would weep if you knew you had but one month to live. You laugh, when perchance you have not one day." On the window opposite, Swift, using a diamond as his pen, wrote another couplet:

"THOU FOOL, TO HANG FOUR CROSSES AT THE DOOR!  
HANG UP THY WIFE, THERE NEEDS NOT ANY MORE!"

At the Rose Inn, Wokingham, Berkshire, John Gay, author of the "*Beggar's Opera*," Jonathan Swift and the American writer Edgar Allan Poe used to amuse themselves by writing verses in praise of the innkeeper's beautiful daughter, Molly Mog. They all went on writing these four-lined stanzas in a competition to see who could find the largest number of different rhymes for her name. The neatest of these, perhaps, is one from the pen of Swift:

A letter when I am inditing  
Comes Cupid and gives me a jog  
And fills all the paper with writing  
Of nothing but sweet Molly Mog.

## CHAPTER XI

### CURIOSITIES OF BRITISH SCHOOLS

THE oldest established British school of to-day is probably St. Alban's Grammar School.

The first Christian school on this Island was that at Llan-Iltyd-Fawr in Wales. St. Iltyd, a famous monk and sage, founded a school here for missionaries in the year 508. He taught Divinity, also Latin and Greek. The school grew and for a period of some hundreds of years its fame has spread abroad. It stands to this day, and now has 2,000 pupils. Among the most illustrious of its alumni are the historians St. David Gildas, Bishop Paulinus and Archbishop Sampson.

The theory that Canterbury may claim to be the oldest Christian school in Britain rests on an error. It is well known that St. Augustine of Canterbury landed in Kent only in the year 596, by which time St. Iltyd, the founder of the school in Wales, had long since been gathered to his fathers. Two years after Augustine came to England he converted King Ethelbert, and it was then that he founded the King's School at Canterbury, chiefly, one may assume, for the instruction of his Christian missionaries. And this seat of learning is not mentioned in the Chronicles until 631.

The oldest of the major Public Schools in Britain is Winchester College, Winchester, Hampshire. This is, of course, one of the world-famous centres of English education. Here, near the site of the present Cathedral, there stood in the days of the Roman occupation, a temple of Apollo, dedicated to the instruction of the young; and later on there was also a school for monks here.

On March 5th, 1380, the foundation stone of the "St. Marie College of Wynchestre in Oxenford" was laid and a year later the licence for the erection of the preparatory school at Winchester was granted to the founder, William of Wykeham. On Saturday, March 26th, 1387—a red-letter day in the annals of English scholastic history—William of Wykeham laid the foundation stone of the present Winchester College. But it was six years before St. Mary's College of Winchester was finished, and in the meantime the scholars lived in St. John the Baptist's presbytery on the hill, moving into their new quarters on March 28th, 1393.

Wykeham died, at the age of 80, on September 27th, 1404, and, at his express wish, was buried in the magnificent chantry, which

## CURIOSITIES OF BRITISH SCHOOLS

he had had erected earlier in Winchester Cathedral on the spot where, as a school boy, he used to pray daily.

A very curious picture hangs in the School hall. It is the famous "*Hircocervus*," the painting of a composite animal; part man, part hog, part deer, part ass. It is intended to illustrate the allegory of the trusty servant.

The explanation is given in the following poem :

"A trusty servant's picture would you see,  
This figure well survey, whoe'er you be.  
The porker's snout not nice in diet shows;  
The padlock shut, no secret he'll disclose;  
Patient, to angry lords the ass gives ear;  
Swiftness in errand, the stag's feet declare;  
Laden his left hand, apt to labour saith;  
The coat his neatness; the open hand his faith;  
Girt with his sword, his shield upon his arm,  
Himself and master he'll protect from harm."

The Underneath Hall of Winchester College, now the "Seventh Chamber," is the oldest extant schoolroom in England; it is the only original fourteenth century school-building to be found anywhere.

Among the fifteenth century schools we may mention Chicheley's School, at Higham Ferrars, in Northamptonshire, a market town five miles east of Wellingborough. Henry Chicheley, Archbishop of Canterbury from 1414 to 1443, and founder of All Souls' College, Oxford, was born here in 1362 and in 1422 established a college for a master and seven canons. He dedicated it to Saint Mary, Saint Thomas the Martyr and Saint Edward the Confessor.

Subsequently it was supplemented by a grammar school, which was closed in 1907. The rooms have been incorporated in the Church of St. Mary, and the remains of the College, including portions of the cloisters, a gateway and a curious sundial, are still to be seen in the main street.

Another school building which has come down to us from the fifteenth century is to be found at Wainfleet All Saints, in east Lincolnshire, 18 miles north-east of Boston. This was founded in the year 1459 by William of Waynflete, Bishop of Winchester and Lord Chancellor of England, in this his home town. Waynflete was made Master of Winchester School in 1420, but in 1442 became Provost of Eton. In 1458 he established Magdalen College, Oxford.

Eton was founded on the pattern of Winchester. It has long been, and still is, the most famous School in Britain, almost certainly in the whole of Europe, and probably the best known school in the whole world. It has its own literature, which treats exclusively of the history of its former scholars.

Fifteen years before the invention of printing, on October 11th, 1440, "The King's College of Our Lady of Eton beside Windsor" (or Blessed Marie of Eton beside Wyndsore) was opened by Henry VI for twenty-five scholars. The oldest class-rooms are still extant and now form the Lower School. This dates from the fifteenth century, whereas the Upper School dates from the year 1690. The paintings in the Chapel rank amongst the finest of their kind which have yet been discovered in England. The great day of celebration at Eton is June 4th, the birthday of George III, and is marked by processions of boats, speeches, firework displays and a gathering of old Etonians.

Among the stately series of Britain's finest and most gifted leaders figure many who received their schooling here. Special mention may be made of the following: Lord Chancellor Stafford of Bath and Wells; Chancellor Waynflete of Winchester, founder of Magdalen College, Oxford; Cardinal and Chancellor Rotherham of Lincoln; Woodlarke, founder of St. Catherine's College, Cambridge; Sir Robert Walpole; Admiral Sir Humphrey Gilbert, the half-brother and friend of Sir Walter Raleigh; Horace Walpole.

Eton was the pioneer among schools in the matter of football, introducing it at the beginning of the sixteenth century. As a matter of fact, the game was known before then, but from 1314 it had been banned by the State, on account of the brutality, unruliness and ear-splitting shouts which characterised the mediaeval game. "Greens," as played nowadays by Westminster School, may be regarded as reminiscent of football as played in those early days.

Football, with proper rules, was not taken up by the London Schools until Westminster and Charterhouse adopted the "Association Game": Rugby introduced its own "Rugby" game.

Even cricket, in its early days, was not regarded as anything but vulgar. In the reign of Edward IV this form of sport was punishable with three years' imprisonment and a fine of £20 in the case of the man who owned the pitch, and, in the case of the players, two years' imprisonment and a fine of £10.

Cricket was first officially played at Westminster under the direction of Doctor John Nicoll, in 1733, on a green plot near the School. Fifty years later came the first important match between Eton and Winchester, though the Etonians who took part were supposed to be expelled for so doing.

It was Charles Fox Townshend who founded the greatest and most famous school society, the Eton society, also known as "Pop" (probably derived from "popina," a provision shop, from the fact that the first meetings were held in a sweet shop). Members of this select society enjoy the privilege of being allowed to wear stand-up collars, instead of the regulation "Eton" model, and



## CURIOSITIES OF BRITISH SCHOOLS

also soft shirts, which are otherwise not allowed; they may also walk arm-in-arm through the streets.

While at Eton, Canning secretly edited a weekly paper known as "*Microcosm*." Shelley, during his school days here, rebelled against the prefect system, which was as hateful to him as the subjection of the slave to his master.

For all that Gladstone called Eton the "Queen of Schools." Dr. Keate—in Shelley's day—was known to flog no less than eighty boys in one single day.

One of the earliest English comedies, "*Ralph Royster Doyster*" (1553) was written for Etonians by their Head, Nicolas Udall.

But in the matter of the performance of plays, the Perse-School in Cambridge has probably the highest claim to fame on account of the performances of plays written by its scholars.

Rugby must be numbered amongst the most famous of the English Schools. It was founded by Lawrence Sheriff, a benevolent citizen of London who was born in Rugby, on July 22nd, 1567.

Nothing is known of his parentage; he himself was a member of the Grocers' Company of London.

At Rugby are to be found many of the oldest school documents which have been preserved, including among others the Trustees' Books of Accounts and Orders from 1667, and the Rugby School Register from 1675.

It was at this School that Thomas Arnold, the great English scholastic reformer, taught and influenced so many pupils. In the School museum is a picture showing the scene on June 15th, 1842, the day of his lamented death.

Harrow School, in Middlesex, must also be regarded as one of the most famous educational foundations in the world.

In the Church of St. Mary is a brass plaque to the memory of John Lyon, who came from the neighbouring parish of Preston and who, on October 8th, 1671, founded the Free Grammar School. For a time he had himself provided instruction for the poor children in the parish, but from this time onwards the institution received official recognition, under the "Keepers and Governors of the School, called the Free Grammar School of John Lyon, in the village of Harrow-on-the-Hill, in the County of Middlesex." One may still see the Fourth Form Room in which Lyon used to teach; its oak panelled walls are covered with the names of those who have studied in this room.

At Preston, in the Parish of Wembley, three miles east of Harrow, the house in which John Lyon lived still stands.

One of the youngest Heads of Harrow was Henry Montagu Butler (1833-1918), himself a son of a former Head. It was in the year 1859—at the age of 26!—that he succeeded Dr. Vaughan in this post, and he must be regarded as one of the pioneers of

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the "Public School Spirit." The Butler Museum at Harrow contains innumerable relics of past eras of glory—Egyptian, prehistoric and Roman antiquities.

In the cemetery we may find the grave of Archdeacon Thackeray, the grandfather of the novelist, who was Headmaster of the School in the years 1746-50.

On the south-west side of the Church there is an altar-tomb, surrounded with a protecting iron fencing, against which Byron used to sit. It was here that he composed the most famous of all Harrow poems, "*On a distant view of the village and School of Harrow-on-the-Hill*" and "*On revisiting Harrow.*"

The oldest and largest Grammar School in London was the *Cathedral Grammar School*. In the year 1137 there were three Grammar Schools in London.

The only school in London which cannot to-day fix the date of its foundation is the Royal School of Westminster. Ingulfus, who subsequently became Abbot of Croyland, "learnt letters first at Westminster." Henry VI founded Eton and Wykeham Winchester.

With these examples for emulation, it was Queen Elizabeth's greatest ambition to found a school, which she did in the shape of the College of St. Peter in Westminster. The first home of this College was the Almonry west of the Abbey Church, "at the end of the grange," which was rebuilt in 1421-22.

In the year 1641 the Grammar School pupils moved into the building as it stands to-day.

The first Boy-Bishop was chosen on St. Nicholas' Day, the 6th December, 1360. This ceremony arose from an earlier custom which was current in mediaeval monasteries on the Continent: On the "Day of the Holy Innocents," the Abbot would choose, from the children, one of their number to lead the procession and conduct the service. This ceremony of the Boy-Bishop was copied by other pupil schools in England.

He preached in the school chapel every day until December 28th, and carried out all the duties of a bishop.

At Eton he commences his term of office as early as November 17th.

This custom, furthermore, was the origin of the world-famous Westminster Play. And after the Play, the tossing of the pancake. The origin of this custom is unknown. In 1755 Bentham wrote: "The Higher School was divided from the Lower by a bar, and it was one of our pastimes to get the cook to throw a pancake over it."

The next important day in the calendar of this School is March 1st, St. David's Day. For over a hundred years, on this day, the head of the family of Williams Wynn used to come back to his old school, a leek in his hand, and present a guinea to each boy

## CURIOSITIES OF BRITISH SCHOOLS

who could prove his Welsh descent. The afternoon was celebrated by "ditch leaping" in Battersea "Fields," a custom which still survives to this day.

The pupils have their own service every morning, at half past nine in the choir of Westminster Abbey. In addition, scholars have the special right to attend all the debates in both Houses of Parliament and all ceremonies in the Abbey. They are, moreover, the first to whom falls the privilege and pleasure of hailing the King, on his coronation, with their "Vivat!"

Taking as his motto Wykeham's famous saying "Manners Makyth Man," the great humanist Dr. John Colet, Dean of St. Paul's, founded St. Paul's School, London. He was a son of Sir Henry Colet, Lord Mayor of London, and was born in 1466. He himself received his education at St. Anthony's School, Threadneedle Street, of which Sir Thomas More, Archbishop Heath and Archbishop Whitgift had also been pupils. One of the first acts of Henry VIII as monarch was to sanction the establishment of the "School of St. Paul" by Dean Colet. It is regarded in our own times as the foremost great non-resident public school. Colet was the first to include Greek in the curriculum of a school, introducing it in 1512. Mr. Lily was the first Greek master on British soil. Colet also was the first to demand that his Head Master, called at St. Paul's the High Master, should be a Greek scholar. But it was William Camden (1531-1623), Head of Westminster, who brought out the first Greek Grammar in England. Camden was himself a scholar of St. Paul's: he was buried in the Cathedral Church of St. Paul.

St. Paul's School was so excellent that, among others, Cardinal Wolsey founded another on the same model in his native town of Ipswich.

Milton enjoyed his schooldays at St. Paul's so much that he resolved to be a schoolmaster himself. In accordance with this resolution he followed the profession for seven years after his return home from Italy in 1640. First he taught in Aldersgate Street and later, when the number of his pupils grew, in Barbican. It was not until his father's death that he gave up teaching.

Christ's Hospital, known also as the "Bluecoat School," was another of London's famous schools. Before its foundation there were in all four Grammar Schools in London, founded by Henry VI. During its very first days, the pupils wore a russet cotton uniform, but when they went to St. Mary's Hospital the following Easter to hear the Easter-week sermons, they were provided with the "long blue coat, reaching to the ankles and girt about the waist with a leather strap, a yellow cassock, or petticoat, now worn under the coat only in winter, though originally an inseparable appendage throughout the year, and stockings of yellow worsted. A pair of

white bands round the neck are a compromise for the rigid ruff or collar, which of old was a part of the dress of all ranks except the lowest; and the black cap, now no longer worn, upon the smallness of which the 'blues' once prided themselves as a peculiar distinction of the school, was a vestige of the cap of larger dimensions worn by citizens at the period of the foundation. There is an old tradition still cherished with pardonable vanity by the boys, that their antique, and, we fear, uncomfortable drugget-gown was once of blue velvet, fastened with silver buttons, and an exact facsimile of the ordinary habit of their Royal founder!" (Howard Staunton).

Among the pupils of this school were: Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Robert Allen, Leigh Hunt, Charles Lamb.

The Merchant Taylors' School, in Suffolk Lane, Upper Thames Street, London, is also one of the oldest and best patronised of the London "cradles of learning." It was founded by the Merchant Taylors "for the better education and bringing up of children in good manners and literature." Richard Hills, one of the fraternity of the "Taylors and Linen Armourers," in the year 1560 offered about £500 for the purchase of a part of the "Manor of the Rose," in the parish of St. Lawrence Poulteney. This was a spacious mansion in Suffolk Lane, built by Sir John Pulteney, five times Lord Mayor of London in the time of Edward III.

Charterhouse School also boasts a long history. Until 1872 it was situated in London, but in that year was removed to Godalming, a town on the old road from London to Portsmouth.

Originally the hospital and school formed one institution, on the site of the old Carthusian Monastery founded in 1371 near St. Bartholomew's Hospital, Aldersgate Street. When the monastery was dissolved, the property was bought first by the Howard Family—later Dukes of Norfolk—and finally by a London merchant, Thomas Button, whose first plan was to convert the building into a hospital with a chapel and a school, but he died within the year, leaving £20,000 for the erection of a hospital and a school, to which James I added a further £10,000.

When, in 1870 the traffic of the metropolis became too heavy, it was decided to move the school to its present site on high ground about half a mile north of Godalming.

In the cloisters there are still preserved architectural relics of the older building, and also the names, some neatly chiselled, others roughly scratched, of scholars who have since become famous; names such as those of General Havelock, Thackeray, Richard Lovelace, Joseph Addison, John Wesley, the founder of Methodism.

A touching example of devotion to the school is shown by the fact that Lord Ellenborough, Lord Chief Justice of England, was, at his special request, buried in the school chapel in London. He

## CURIOSITIES OF BRITISH SCHOOLS

died in 1818 and, to his last days, cherished the warmest feelings of gratitude to the "alma mater" of his early school-days. The inscription on his tombstone reads thus :

"In the Founder's vault are deposited the remains of  
Edward Law, Lord Ellenborough  
(son of Edmund Law, Lord Bishop of Carlisle)  
Chief Justice of the Court of the King's Bench  
from April 1802 to November 1818  
and a Governor of the Charter-house.

He died December 13th, 1818, in the 69th year of his age."

The first Chair of Modern History and Languages was instituted at Oxford in the year 1742, by George I. The first British institution to teach French officially was the School at Stirling, in the year 1755. Sir Robert Taylor, the architect, who died in 1788, placed large sums at the disposal of English schools, from the year 1835 onwards, for providing modern languages.

The first instance of the official inclusion of French in the curriculum of an English school is recorded of Shrewsbury School in 1836, under Kennedy. The early name of this school was *Libera Schola Grammaticalis Regis Edwardi Sexti*, having been established by Edward VI in the year 1552, and enlarged by Queen Elizabeth in 1571. For the first 300 years of its history it was housed in the Elizabethan and Jacobean building which now serves as the Public Library and Museum. Since 1882, it has occupied a fine site at Kingsland, overlooking the Severn.

Its pupils included Sir Philip Sidney and Charles Dickens.

The smallest school in Britain is supposed to be that at Glen Nevis in Scotland. It is housed in a small hut, with space for only ten pupils, and has at the present time but half that number on the roll.

The first popular Sunday school on British soil was opened by Robert Raikes in 1735 at Gloucester. The house in which he first gave religious instruction is still pointed out with some pride by the citizens. Raikes was the son of the printer of the *Gloucester Journal*, and himself worked as a reporter on his father's newspaper. He made himself the champion of prisoners and was instrumental in securing better conditions for them in their cells and in their treatment generally. He then turned his attention to other public abuses. Here is his account of how he conceived the plan of his Sunday school.

"Some business leading me one morning into the suburbs of the city, where the lowest of the people (who are principally employed in the pin manufactory) chiefly reside, I was struck with concern on seeing a group of children, wretchedly ragged, at play in the street. An enquiry of a neighbour produced an account of the

miserable state and deplorable profligacy of these infants more especially on a Sunday, when left to their own direction."

In a few years others were following his example, so that after fifty years had elapsed similar Sunday schools had been instituted all over the country, and were gratefully and cheerfully attended.

There are many famous men who began their careers first of all as pedagogues. Let us read an announcement from *The Gentleman's Magazine* ":

"AT EDIAL, NEAR LICHFIELD IN STAFFORDSHIRE, YOUNG GENTLEMEN ARE BOARDED AND TAUGHT THE LATIN AND GREEK LANGUAGES BY SAMUEL JOHNSON."

Of course the man who inserted this advertisement was none other than Samuel Johnson, in later life the famous lexicographer. He opened a school at Edial Hall, near Hammerwich in Staffordshire. (Incidentally it was here that, years later, Darwin had his private botanic garden.)

Only three pupils, however, were enrolled at this school: the first was a little boy named David Garrick, who later became the famous actor, the second was his little brother George, and the third some little urchin or other. Schoolmaster Johnson honestly did his best for his pupils, but in the end he had to admit himself beaten; so he decided to shut down his school. Though he may well have been deeply grieved by his failure at the time, this abrupt ending of his career as a teacher at Edial Hall was really a tremendous piece of good fortune, since it left him with no choice but to go to London to seek his fortune.

Meanwhile young David was sent on to the Mathematic School at Rochester, Kent, which is the town where Dickens spent his childhood and also his last days—at Gad's Hill Place. Incidentally Dickens' mother, too, tried her hand at running a school. At 4, Gower Street, London, she put up a board, announcing that here was "MRS. DICKENS' ESTABLISHMENT, SCHOOL FOR GIRLS." But she didn't make much success of it either, running up debts and so occasioning her husband's—Charles' father's—world-famous visit to the debtors' prison.

At the Grammar School in the little town of Plympton St. Maurice, near Ivybridge in Devonshire, established in 1658, Mr. Reynolds was schoolmaster, teaching among others his son Joshua, later to become Sir Joshua Reynolds, the artist.

At the village of Hawkshead, near Windermere in Westmorland, there is a bench in the school with a piece of glass let in, under which one reads the inscription: "HERE SAT WILLIAM WORDSWORTH."

Shakespeare received his schooling at the Grammar School at Stratford.

## CURIOSITIES OF BRITISH SCHOOLS

Alfred Tennyson went to the Grammar School at Louth in Lincolnshire. Here he was amongst the worst pupils who ever attended the school, either before or since his day. In contrast to him, we may mention Humphrey Davy, whose career at the Penzance Grammar School was almost meteoric.

The Scottish divine, Thomas Chalmers, received his early education at the hands of the half-blind village schoolmaster at the Latin School at his birthplace, Anstruther, in Fifeshire. But when he was twelve he graduated, with his elder brother, to the United College of St. Andrews.

Oliver Cromwell attended a Grammar School near his native town of Huntingdon, on the Huntingdonshire Ouse, a school which also claimed Samuel Pepys among its more illustrious pupils. The building in which this school was housed was built round some Norman remains, formerly the Hospice of St. John the Baptist, founded by King David of Scotland towards the end of the twelfth century.

In Richmond is a Grammar School which acquired widespread fame through the well-known Richmond lawsuit. It was here that the Headmaster dismissed all his assistant masters eight days before the autumn term. The teachers asked for payment of fees for the term, but the court did not uphold their claim. It required the consolidated forces of an organisation to secure for the profession the statutory right to at least two months' notice.

There was one headmaster who, being an "unpatriotic" theologian, was described as no gentleman; being ignorant of cricket and football, as no sportsman; and not having received a public school education, as no scholar. He took up his duties in 1892 at a small country Grammar School at Oundle, in Northamptonshire—originally founded and endowed by the Guild of Grocers in the year 1485—and introduced an entirely new system of teaching, based on the recognition of the paramount importance of practical work. He was all for the creative spirit, and against arid theory. "We believe in the creative urge," was one of his guiding principles. It was he who was responsible for the idea that the creative spirit can only be all-powerful when subjected to the service of others.

Thus he replaced the hidebound public-school caste system by the revolutionary ideal of fellowship in education.

Sanderson died in harness in 1922, from a stroke, while teaching in his schoolroom.

## CHAPTER XII

### CURIOUS BRIDGES

**N**OBODY can say with any certainty where the oldest bridge in Britain is to be found to-day. According to some, the oldest stone bridge still in use is the clapper bridge, high up on Dartmoor, in the south-west of Devonshire, where, raised on three stone piers, it spans the East Dart river. It is 40 feet six inches long and is known as the "Post Bridge," taking its name from the granite posts which were provided to guide wayfarers through the snow or in the darkness to the bridge-head.

Others again cite the bridge at Crowland, eight miles north-east of Peterborough, in Lincolnshire, a bridge built by monks in the year 943. This, however, now serves only as a by-way, since the river which it once spanned has long since dried up.

Of reputed Roman bridges there are still three extant.

The first of these is the Calder Bridge, near Bothwell in Lanarkshire, some nine miles to the south-east of Glasgow. Here too one finds Bothwell Bridge across the Clyde, scene of one of the decisive battles in Scottish history, where the Royalists, under the Duke of Monmouth, met the army of the Covenanters, the latter losing five hundred dead and a thousand prisoners.

The second so-called Roman bridge still standing in our own times is the Devil's Bridge, twelve miles from Aberystwyth, on the Cardiganshire coast of Wales, not far from the lovely vale of Reidol and the Falls of Mynach.

Actually it consists of three bridges of different periods, superimposed one on the other, across the River Mynach. This structure gets its name from a legend which was originally told of the lowest and oldest part.

It is said that this span was thrown across the stream by the Devil when the river was in flood and an old woman, whose cow had strayed across to the further bank of the river, found herself unable to ford it safely. The Devil appeared and made a bargain with her, promising to provide her with a bridge if she would give him, in return, the first living thing which crossed the bridge.

But the old woman was at least as wily as the Devil. She sent her dog across in front of her and thus cheated him of his coveted prize.

There are some remains of an undoubted Roman bridge on the



## CURIOUS BRIDGES

Tyne near the Chesters, in Northumberland, not to be confused with the county town of Cheshire.

Fragments of an ancient Roman bridge are to be seen half a mile from Chepstow Bridge, in Monmouthshire.

In the year 1066 at the old Roman Stamford Bridge, which stood on the site of the present one between York and Driffield, over the River Derwent, raged the grim battle in which King Harold defeated the Norwegian King. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle tells us that :

“There was one of the Norwegians who withstood the English folk so that they could not pass over the bridge nor complete the victory. An Englishman aimed at him with a javelin, but it availed nothing. Then came another under the bridge, who pierced him terribly inwards under the coat of mail. And Harold, King of the English, then came over the bridge followed by his army, and here they made a great slaughter both of the Norwegians and of the Flemings.”

Only one Saxon bridge remains to this day : this is Harold Bridge, over the Lea near Waltham Abbey, a small market town in Essex.

The mediaeval bridge with the largest span—90 feet, with a rise of 43 feet—is Twizel Bridge in Northumberland. This was standing as far back as the year 1513, when it was used by the Earl of Surrey and the English troops on their way to the battle of Flodden Field. It leads over the River Hill, between Berwick-on-Tweed and Cornhill.

Thornborough Bridge, which crosses the River Ouse between Buckingham and Bletchley, is remarkable as being, in the words of the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments, “the only mediaeval example of its class in the country.”

Many of the mediaeval bridges had chantry chapels ; four of these may still be seen at St. Ives, in Huntingdonshire, at Bradford-on-Avon in Wiltshire, at Rotherham in Yorkshire, and at Wakefield, also in Yorkshire.

The altar in the St. Ives Bridge Chapel was dedicated to St. Lawrence in 1426. The bridge was subsequently restored ; it leads from St. Ives to Potton. The chapel is now a museum.

The chantry of the Bradford-on-Avon Bridge is still standing. At the time of the Reformation it was a chapel, later a prison and later still a powder magazine. In “*British Bridges*” we read :

“On the domed roof is a wind vane bearing a gudgeon, the emblem of St. Nicholas, whence prisoners confined in this lock-up were said to be under the fish and over the water.”

The chantry bridge at Rotherham over the River Don dates from the year 1483. The chantry was established by Thomas Scott,

Archbishop of York from 1480 to 1500, a native of Rotherham. After Queen Elizabeth's accession it was used as an almshouse and after 1779 as a prison. From 1826 to 1913 it served as a tobacco shop. In 1924 it was restored and rededicated to religious purposes, under the diocese of the Bishop of Sheffield.

The old Chantry Bridge, Wakefield, over the River Calder between Leeds, Bradford, Sheffield and Doncaster, is preserved only as an ancient monument. It was originally, according to Defoe, "a stately stone bridge of twelve arches." He also attributed the building of the chapel to Edward IV, who dedicated it to the memory of the fatal battle of Wakefield, in which his father, Richard, Duke of York, was killed by the Lancastrians.

Two bridges still have houses upon them—Pulteney Bridge at Bath, and High Bridge at Lincoln—mentioned in Thomas Hardy's "*Tess of the D'Urbervilles*."

The site of the present-day Bedford Bridge over the River Ouse in Bedfordshire was once occupied by a little stone bridge with a stone house on it, in which John Bunyan was imprisoned and wrote a part of his "*Pilgrim's Progress*." The bridge links Bedford with the London road.

The Monnow Bridge at Monmouth (Monmouthshire) has a fortified gate house, built in 1296 for the purpose of levying toll on merchandise taken over the bridge. During the Civil War it was successively held by the Royalists and the Parliamentarians. The bridge spans the River Monnow, between Monmouth and Usk.

Grosvenor Bridge, Chester, which runs from Chester into North Wales, claims the distinction of possessing the masonry arch with the longest span in England. It was built between 1827 and 1832 and, with its span of 200 feet, rise of 40 feet, and total length of 344 feet, was the largest stone bridge in the world.

The first iron bridge of any size in the world was built in 1779 at Ironbridge, Coalbrookdale, Shropshire, over the River Severn. This structure, with a total length of 196 feet, comprises a single span 100½ feet long with a rise of 50 feet, consisting of cast-iron ribs and floor with masonry abutments.

The largest steel arch bridge is the Tyne Bridge, Newcastle-on-Tyne, Northumberland. It is 531 feet in length and carries the road over the River Tyne.

One of the largest cast-iron arch bridges in England is the Holt Fleet Bridge, Ombersley, in Worcestershire, crossing the River Severn between Holt Fleet and Droitwich. It consists of a single span 150 feet long and was the first bridge of its kind to be erected in Britain.

The first wrought-iron girder road bridge was built in 1841, with a span of 31½ feet, at Glasgow, and the first large British girder

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bridge of iron was that put up by Robert Stephenson and T. E. Harrison—the High Level Bridge, with its six 125-foot spans, at Newcastle-on-Tyne.

The first reinforced concrete bridge (beams and arches) was built at Satterthwaite, Lancashire, in 1902.

The largest bridges for road traffic in Britain are the following: The Widness and Runcorn Transport Bridge, which spans the estuary of the Mersey and the Manchester Ship Canal between Widness and Runcorn, providing a means of communication between the Liverpool district, Cheshire, North Wales and the Midlands. This structure has the longest span of any road-traffic bridge: the distance over the Mersey and Ship Canal is 1,000 feet, the girders about 1,150 feet.

The Middlesbrough Transporter Bridge runs between Middlesbrough and Billingham, over the River Tees, Yorkshire, and is 850 feet long.

The Newport Transporter Bridge crosses the Usk, has a length of 1,545 feet, and towers  $241\frac{1}{2}$  feet high.

Transporter bridges have no roadway, but convey traffic across in a car slung by wire cables from the upper girders and driven by an electric motor.

The Forth Bridge, which carries the L.N.E. Railway line from North Queensferry in Fife to South Queensferry in East Lothian, is one of the finest bridges in the world. It was seven years in the building, cost over £3,000,000 and was opened in 1890 by Edward VII when Prince of Wales. An army of workmen is constantly employed in painting the bridge. It takes them a year to work from one end to the other.

The longest bridge in Britain, 3,595 yards in length, is the Tay Bridge, over the Firth of Tay, near Dundee, the Scottish seaport in Angus. This bridge has a history, and a very tragic one too.

In the year 1870 the North British Railway Company obtained from Parliament permission to construct a railway bridge over the Tay near Dundee. By May, 1878, the bridge was completed, at a cost of £350,000. It was 10,612 feet long and consisted of 85 spans, some of them over 90 feet above high-water level.

On the evening of December 28th, 1879, during a terrific storm, thirteen of the spans collapsed. The Edinburgh express was just passing over that part of the bridge; it was derailed and hurled into the raging floods below, seventy people being buried in the wreckage.

The present bridge was sanctioned by Parliament in 1881. It comprises 84 spans, varying in length from 50 to 245 feet, and its story, if less eventful than that of its predecessor, is at least less gruesome.

## 1,000 CURIOSITIES OF BRITAIN

The largest "portal" bridge is the reinforced concrete Wisbech Bridge, near the Isle of Ely, Cambridgeshire. (Span 92 feet, width 45 feet, total length 103 feet.)

The largest "bascule" bridge of the rolling lift type is that at Keadby, Lincolnshire. (Span 150 feet, width 55 feet.) This carries the double track of the London & North Eastern Railway between Keadby and Gunness over the River Trent: it has a total length of 547½ feet.

Britain's largest suspension bridge is the Menai Suspension Bridge, which joins Anglesey to the mainland of North Wales. The first suspension bridge over the Thames is the Hammersmith Bridge, over which Hammersmith Bridge Road leads out of London. The oldest of the Thames bridges is Radcot Bridge, which leads across a backwater from Bampton to Faringdon, thus linking Oxfordshire and Berkshire. It was probably built in the thirteenth century.

"*British Bridges*" tells us that "at an ancient wharf adjacent to the bridge, stone for the building of St. Paul's Cathedral, brought from quarries at Upton in the Cotswolds, was loaded on rafts to be floated to London."

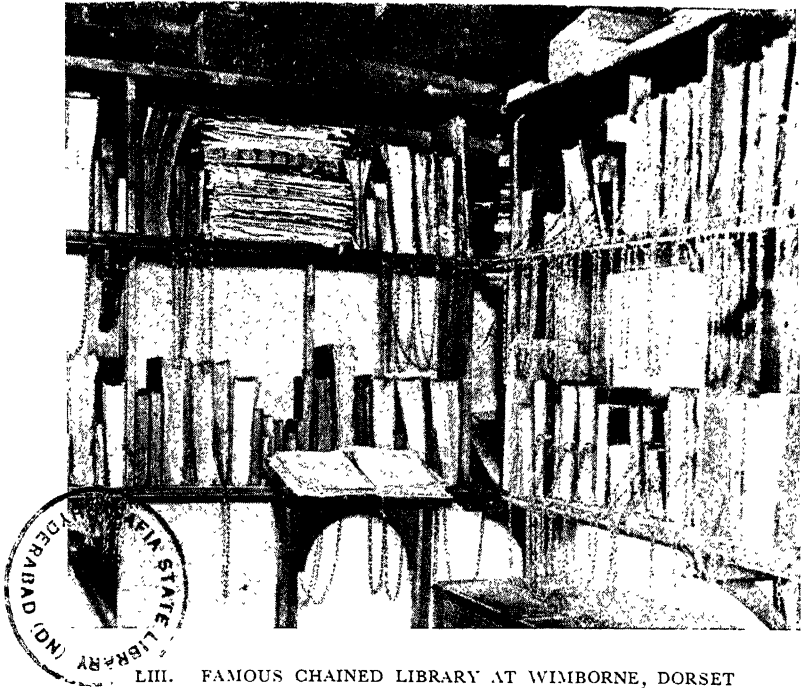
The first iron bridge over the Thames was Vauxhall Bridge, joining Westminster and Lambeth, London. It was replaced by a second bridge in 1906, and was the first bridge in London to carry a tramway.

The two so-called "noblest bridges in the world" are London Bridge and Southwark Bridge, over the Thames in London. It should be noted that these Thames bridges are very small in comparison with many famous foreign examples. Until recently they formed a trio with Waterloo Bridge, which has now disappeared under the bridge-breaker's pick. These three bridges have even a monument of their own in a church. They were all the creation of Sir Edward Banks, whose last resting place is the 700-year-old Church of St. Margaret, at Chipstead, near Merstham in Surrey; and on his gravestone his three famous bridges are portrayed.

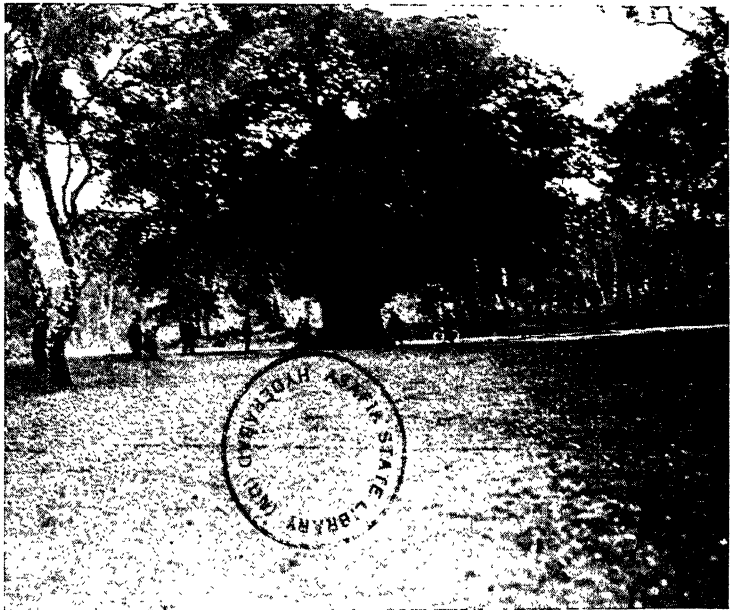
A much travelled bridge is the Clifton Suspension Bridge, over the Avon at Bristol. Until 1864 this remarkable structure spanned the Thames near Charing Cross, London, but in that year it was dismantled, transported to Bristol, reassembled and slung across the Avon Gorge.

Pant-Y-Goytre Bridge, in Monmouthshire, on the Usk-Abergavenny road over the River Usk, was built by John Upton, of Gloucester, in 1821. Subsequently his business failed and he fled from his creditors to Russia, where he found scope for his capabilities in building the fortifications of Sebastopol. But after the fall of this fortress he was taken prisoner by the British.

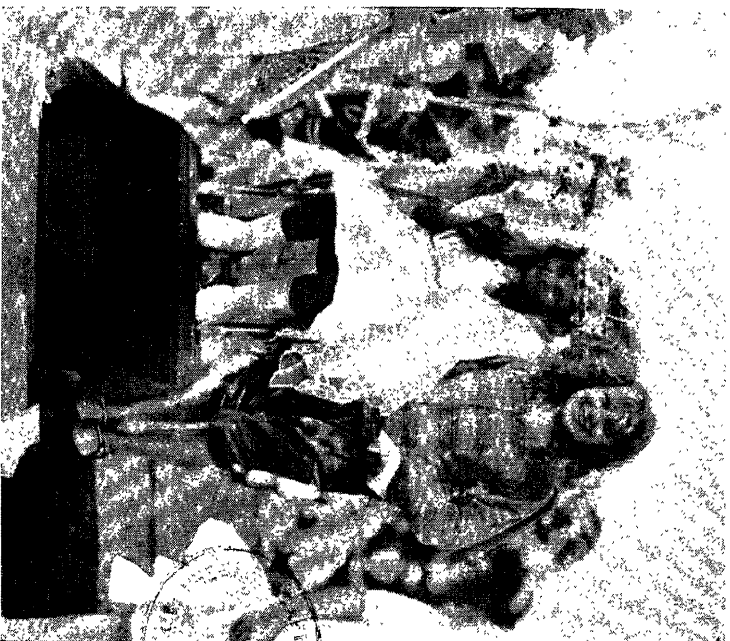
An interesting bridge is that of Queen's College, Cambridge, a



LIII. FAMOUS CHAINED LIBRARY AT WIMBORNE, DORSET



LIV. QUEEN, OR MAJOR OAK, SHERWOOD FOREST



LV. THE MAY QUEEN AND PRINCE OF MERRIE  
ENGLAND, HAYES



LVI. THE TRUSTY SERVANT INN SIGN, MINSTEAD,  
HANTS

## CURIOUS BRIDGES

wooden structure said to have been built originally without nails by Isaac Newton.

On Wilton Bridge, Ross-on-Wye in Herefordshire, there is a sundial with the inscription :

“Redeem thy precious time  
Which pass so swift away.  
Prepare thou for eternity  
And do not make delay.”

One of the finest poems by William Wordsworth was composed upon Westminster Bridge, London, September 3, 1802 :

“Earth has not anything to show more fair :  
Dull would he be of soul who could pass by  
A sight so touching in its majesty :  
This City now doth, like a garment, wear  
The beauty of the morning ; silent bare,  
Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie  
Open unto the fields, and to the sky ;  
All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.  
Never did sun more beautifully steep  
In his first splendour, valley, rock, or hill ;  
Ne’er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep !  
The river glideth at his own sweet will :  
Dear God ! The very houses seem asleep ;  
And all that mighty heart is lying still.”

## CHAPTER XIII

### FOLLYS AND CURIOUS RELICS

WHAT an impression of indomitable power is conveyed by the long, high, battlemented façade of Sham Castle, at Bath. On closer inspection, however, one discovers with amazement that the windows are all walled up and the gateway has no real door in it. If you pass under the centre entrance, you will find yourself still standing in the open air. For in actuality this is no castle: it is Sham Castle in more than name and, like a film set, is nothing but a façade.

The same thing applies to Bradgate Hall in Bradgate Park, near Newton Linford, Leicestershire. Behind the ruins of what was once a wall, on a lonely hilltop, the crenelated Old John Tower rears itself to the heavens. But that is all: the rest is all ruins. Yet here there once stood a stately mansion, seat of the Grey family—the Barons Grey of Groby and the Marquesses of Dorset had their proud home here. This was the family of Lady Jane Grey, the eleven-days' queen who, with her husband Lord Guildford Dudley, was executed at the Tower of London.

The handsome edifice which once stood here was burnt down by the wife of the Earl of Suffolk. She had married well, but, somehow, nothing about the place pleased her. "The house is intolerable," she wrote to her sister, "the land is a forest, and the inhabitants all brutes!" So her sister advised her to set fire to it and escape.

She followed this advice and, so the chronicle tells us, fled with her baby Diana into the woods. "The Earl," the chronicle continues, "separated from his wife, in consequence of her unparadonable folly of setting fire to Bradgate Hall . . ."

In the middle of the fruitful fields of the village of Horton, six miles north of Wimborne, in East Dorset, a 120-foot high tower dominates the peaceful scene.

This landmark was built in 1700, as part of a projected observatory, but it remained a mere project. For the last 250 years—almost—it has stood empty and unoccupied.

It must have been—to put it mildly—a dreamer who, on the hill-top at Farrington, nine miles north-west of Wantage, in Berkshire, desecrated the enchanting clump of trees planted there some century and a half ago by the poet Henry James Page, by building a very high tower in the midst of them.



## FOLLYS AND CURIOUS RELICS

And why?

This is a question which no one has yet been able to answer.

An eccentric retired barrister, Andrew Peterson, built, at Sway, four miles north-west of Lymington in Hampshire, a 200-foot tower of ferro-concrete, in which, according to his instructions, he was to be buried. This was to be a sort of Parsee tower of silence, and at the top, a light was to be kindled and kept burning.

The strange monument was completed, and the barrister closed his eyes for the last time: the light was kindled.

But then the trouble began: ships at sea confused this light with the lamps of the lighthouse and coastguards.

So the light was prohibited, and with it, the proposed form of burial.

To-day the tower still stands, as if in mourning—obviously for its master, who left it behind him a useless relic.

What must be one of the world's most remarkable memorials. takes the form of a round tower with crosses in its topmost breast-work, built up against a two-storeyed farmhouse. This tower, known as the Volta tower, may be seen standing at Finedon, three miles north-west of Wellingborough in Northamptonshire. Actually it is a cenotaph erected to the memory of the foundered ship *Volta*, which was lost at sea in September 1863, and with it the son of William H. F. Markworth-Dutton, whose father owned and built the house.

Near the town of Alton in Hampshire, a somewhat crazy school-master spent thirty years in planning and erecting a building in which no normal human being could live. It had rooms without doors or windows and passages which led nowhere. Further, this peculiar pedagogue forgot to put in a staircase. When he died, his heirs rebuilt this remarkable product of a bemazed mind, at least in so far as its worst features were concerned, and thus made it fit for use as the village school.

At Edinburgh there is a national monument commemorating the Battle of Waterloo. But it has never been completed.

The Tudor Castle at Thornbury in Gloucestershire, eleven miles north of Bristol, was built by Edward, Third Duke of Buckingham—at least, the work was begun in 1511, but never completed.

A two-thousand-year-old temple with Corinthian columns stands peacefully in idyllic surroundings in a corner of the Windsor Great Park, near Virginia Water, Egham, Surrey. This lovely edifice once graced the ancient Leptis Magna, near Tripoli, where it was a world-famous place of worship. Decades ago, an admirer dismantled it and brought it all those three thousand miles from its African home to this quiet corner of England.

At Eastry near Sandwich, in Kent, one may still see the palace of

King Ethelbert. Under his throne here this monarch hid the corpse of his murdered cousin.

Beneath the seat of the old oak Coronation Chair of Edward I, which stands in Westminster Abbey, lies the famous Scone Stone. This was the symbol of the might of Scotland's princes; according to legend, it was on this stone that Jacob laid his head when he slept and dreamed his famous dream at Bethel.

The original Coronation Stone of the early Kings of England is preserved at Kingston-on-Thames, three and a half miles south of Richmond, in Surrey.

In the arcade of Chillingham Castle, in Northumberland, the famous Toad Stone has been preserved. It forms part of a mantelpiece and has carved on it a picture of "Susanna and the Elders." It is said to be exceedingly old.

After the Tower of London and Westminster Abbey, the next most historic building in London is Westminster Hall. It was here that Charles I was tried and condemned to death. Guy Fawkes and Warren Hastings also stood their trials here, and on the southern gable Cromwell's head, stuck on a pike, was hoisted.

The shirt which Charles I wore at his execution has been preserved and is on show at Ashburnham Place, Hastings, in Sussex. In the hospital of the market-town of Moreton-in-the-Marsh, seven miles north-west of Chipping Norton, in Gloucestershire, one may still see the chair in which Charles I sat during his trial.

Among the tombs of the great ones of Britain who are interred in Westminster Abbey, one may find a little coffin in the shape of a cradle. This was made for the three-year-old daughter of James I. Here too are the mortal remains of the murdered sons of Edward V, Edward and his brother the Duke of York, who were murdered in the Tower in 1483 by order of Richard III.

During her divorce proceedings, Katharine of Aragon, wife of Henry VIII, lived in the market town of Ampthill, seven miles south of Bedford. A cross marks the place where she lodged.

The death chamber of Queen Katharine of Aragon, who died in 1536, has been preserved as it was and may be seen in the Castle of Kimbolton, Huntingdonshire, the seat of the Duke of Manchester.

The table on which Queen Elizabeth signed the death warrant of Mary Stuart is now in the Middle Temple Hall, near Fleet Street, London.

The Norman keep at Carlisle, Cumberland, where Mary Stuart was held prisoner in 1568, houses a number of interesting historic relics. Of the 18½ years during which she was a prisoner on English soil, she spent fourteen at Sheffield Castle in the West Riding of Yorkshire.

In Shrewsbury Chapel there is a memorial to Mary Stuart's

## FOLLYS AND CURIOUS RELICS

chief gaoler. In Peterborough Cathedral, which houses the grave of Queen Catherine, and which formerly housed that of Mary Stuart, before it was removed to Westminster, one may see a portrait of Old Scarlett, the sexton who dug the graves for the two queens.

In Scarborough Castle, in the North Riding of Yorkshire, you may see the cell in which George Fox, the Quaker, was imprisoned for a whole year (1665-1666). When the Governor visited him in his cell, he was unable to find the way out, the room was so full of smoke.

At Elstow, in Bedfordshire, one may still see an ancient, historic Moot Hall. In the days before the Normans conquered Britain, government was a local affair, and the governing bodies held their meetings in these Moot Halls.

King Arthur's mortal remains are enshrined in the great, towering limestone rock at Craig-y-Ddinas, in the Vale of Neath, South Wales.

The Scottish hero William Wallace is represented in an unusually large statue between Bemersyde and Dryburgh, in north-west Roxburghshire.

In Westminster Hall one may see a murder memorial, on which is a representation of the murder, in 1682, of Thomas Thynn in Pall Mall. The memory of the murderer Bellingham is also perpetuated here by the statue of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Spencer Perceval.

One of the monuments in Westminster Abbey now takes the form of a table. There used once to be a bust of the Abbot Islip (*d.* 1532) here, but it was destroyed by the Puritans, who left the table only, as it stands to-day.

Even a tailor may have a monument set up to him. The Tailor's Stone on the high road near Bridgworth, in Shropshire, commemorates the following incident, so the guide book tells us :

"A tailor made a bet he would make a coat on it (the stone); but while stitching on the last button, he dropped his thimble and, in trying to catch it fell himself and broke his neck."

In a church in Battersea, London, there is a bas-relief which commemorates the heroic courage of Sir Edward Wynter: on it he may be seen strangling a tiger with his bare hands: it was thus that he saved his life in India.

"Alone, unarm'd, a tyger he oppressed,  
And crushed to death the monster of a beast;  
Twice twenty Moors he also overthrew,  
Singly on foot; some wounded; some he slew;  
Dispersed the rest. What more could Sampson do?"

A monument to an Indian Mutiny hero may be seen in St.

Nicholas' Chapel, Linchfield, Staffordshire. It represents "Hodson of Hodson's Horse."

A lottery prize of £20,000, won by Mr. Blakeway in the 18th century, provided the money for the erection of Lythwood Hall in the parish of Bayston Hill, near Condover in Shropshire.

At Piel Castle, in Lancashire, there is a little memento of the landing of Germans in England, which occurred in the year 1487, when the Earl of Lincoln and Martin Swartz, with their German and Irish mercenaries, marched on London hoping to set the German, Lambert Simnel, on the throne as king. "King" Simnel "reigned" for a short time at Piel Castle, but his forces were quickly routed, and thus the dynasty died an early death.

During the night before January 6th, 1781, seven hundred French troops, under the leadership of the adventurer Baron de Rullecourt, landed at La Platte Rocque, on the island of Jersey. The sequel may be learnt from inscriptions on graves in the local church:

"The remains of Major Francis Peirson, who by his courage and conduct rescued the Island of Jersey from the hands of a rapacious enemy the sixth day of January 1781, are here deposited. He fell at the head of his conquering troops, in the 25th year of his age."

All the Frenchmen were taken prisoner, except Baron de Rullecourt, who was killed. His grave is in this same church.

This was the last attack made by the French on the British Islands.

The famous Lloyd's coffee-house, where insurance brokers in London used to meet and had their exchange, was at No. 15 Lombard Street. From this grew up the world's greatest insurance corporation. In its magnificent new premises in Leadenhall Street hangs the bell of the *Lutine*, a vessel which foundered in 1799 with a large cargo of gold.

In the Committee Room in the new Lloyd's building in Leadenhall Street, one may see the first policy issued to the *Golden Fleece* on January 20th, 1680.

Another very interesting collection of documents is to be found in Lloyd's Register of Shipping, at 71, Fenchurch Street, in the City of London. Here one may see the "A.1" first Lloyd's register of 1775.

In Plymouth, on the spot where Francis Drake was playing his famous game of bowls when the news was brought to him that the Armada had been sighted, there stands a monument to him. Drake's ship, the *Golden Hind*, is to be seen in the Scottish Museum in Edinburgh.

One of the most magnificent monuments to Nelson is his ship, the *Victory*, on which he met his death during the Battle of

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Trafalgar. After a period of service longer than that of any other British battleship, it found its last resting place in King Charles' Dock, Portsmouth, where it may still be seen, and in it many relics of this national hero. The ship serves to-day as the flagship of the Admiral of the Station.

At Paxton's Tower, Llanarthney, South Wales, there is a monument to Nelson with the inscription in three languages: Latin, Welsh and English.

A red buoy marks the spot, near Southsea, in Hampshire, where the *Royal George* sank in the year 1782, an unostentatious memorial to the courage of the crew who remained at their posts as she went down.

One is reminded of the tragic loss of the *Titanic*, which occurred on April 15th, 1912, by a monument erected to the memory of her engineers and firemen in the park at Southampton. In Approach Road, near Waterloo Bridge, London, there is a monument to William Thomas Stead (1849-1912) who perished in the *Titanic*.

Outside the Town Hall at Dover, in Kent, one may see hanging the bell which gave the alarm at Zeebrugge.

The memory of the boy-hero of the Battle of Jutland—Jack Cornwell—is perpetuated by a monument in the Manor Park Cemetery, near Ilford, on the outskirts of London.

A monument in the Brompton cemetery marks the grave of Flight Sub-Lieutenant R. A. J. Warneford. He won fame by his exploit in bringing down the German Zeppelin L.Z. 37 near Ghent. He crashed to his death in Paris in the year 1915.

At Marlow, on the River Thames, five miles north-west of Maidenhead, in Buckinghamshire, there stands a monument to the memory of Charles Frohman (1860-1915), a victim of the *Lusitania* catastrophe.

There is a memorial, in Liverpool Street Station, London, to Captain Fryatt, of the mail-steamer *Brussels*, who was shot by the Germans at Brussels in 1916.

The obelisk which one sees at Cuffley, four miles N.N.W of Enfield, in south Hertfordshire, marks the spot where, on the night of September 3rd, 1916, Captain W. L. Robinson brought down the German Zeppelin L 21. The doomed airship could be seen from London, as it fell in flames.

Near to the Church of St. Edmund King and Martyr, in Lombard Street, in the City of London, there are fragments of a German aerial bomb which fell there on July 7th, 1917.

Throughout the length and breadth of the British Isles one may find memorials to those who fell in the Great War, varying in character from the stately cenotaph in Whitehall to the humblest shrine by the country wayside. There is space here only to men-

tion a remarkable memorial, namely that at Loughborough in Leicestershire. It stands in Queen's Park, Granby Street, in that town, and takes the form of a Memorial Tower with a carillon of 47 bells, on which peals are rung from a keyboard below. This tower was erected by the Corporation and the leading personalities and business houses of the town, at a cost of £20,000, in addition to which, however, the mothers of the fallen contributed their sons' war medals, which were melted down and cast in the metal of the bells. Thus, whenever they hear the carillon, they are reminded of their children's heroic deeds and are comforted by the thought that through the form chosen for this memorial, their remembrance will be kept alive and honoured as long as the bells ring.

One of the few memorials to women is to be seen in Lincoln's Inn Fields, London: it is that erected to the memory of Margaret MacDonald, wife of J. Ramsay MacDonald, the first Labour Prime Minister of England. The courage and devotion of the nurses of Liverpool are commemorated by the Nurses' Memorial in the Lady Chape of Liverpool Cathedral.

Not far from the Nelson column in Trafalgar Square, London, is an impressive monument to the memory of Edith Cavell (1865-1915), who was sentenced to be shot as a spy by a German court martial in Brussels.

Another fine monument dominates the churchyard of Barmburgh, in Northumberland, in honour of the courageous Grace Darling, heroine of many a song and poem, who saved the lives of so many who would otherwise have perished at sea. She was the seventh child of a humble lighthouse keeper, and was born at Longstone Lighthouse, on the Farne Islands, in 1815. On September 7th, 1838, she went to the rescue of the crew of the 300-ton cargo boat *Forfarshire*, and thus earned for herself the title of "the girl who laughed in the face of danger."

"F.N.

born 12. May 1820 in Florence  
died 13. August 1910 in London."

That is all that is betrayed by the epitaph on the monument to Florence Nightingale in the little country churchyard near Embley Park, two miles west of Romsey in south Hampshire; but it was put there at the request of the "Lady with the Lamp" herself. This English pioneer of hygiene during the Crimean War ought, by rights, to have been buried in Westminster Abbey. But at her own express wish she was laid to rest beside her parents near her own old home.

At Coventry, in north Warwickshire, the inhabitants will still show you the streets along which Lady Godiva rode, as directed by

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her husband, Leoffric, Earl of Mercia. Tennyson has retold the story of this courageous exploit, originally enshrined in the legend of Matthew of Westminster. It was only by riding, unclothed—except for her long hair—through the streets of Coventry that she was able to persuade her husband to remit the onerous taxation he had imposed on the poor citizens. At the corner of Hertford Street, your guide will show you an effigy of “Peeping Tom,” a tailor who peeped through a chink in his shutters and was struck blind, whilst all the other grateful citizens averted their gaze from this amazing spectacle of self-sacrifice.

The monument which commemorates the outbreak of the Great Fire of London, stands 202 feet from the site of the bakehouse in Pudding Lane in which the fire started towards midnight of the 2nd September, 1666. It was built by Christopher Wren, at the request of Charles II, in the year 1671, and is a fluted Doric column, higher than the pillars of Trajan and Antoninus at Rome, and even than the monument of Theodosius at Constantinople, which had, up to the time of its erection, been the largest column of this kind in Europe. It is regarded as the finest isolated column in the world. On the four sides of the square pedestal, scenes of the origin of the fire are depicted.

On the north side we read :

“ . . . about midnight, a most terrible fire broke out, which driven on by a high wind, not only wasted the adjacent parts, but also places very remote, with incredible noise and fury. It consumed eighty-nine churches, the City gates, Guildhall, many public structures, hospitals, schools, libraries, a vast number of stately edifices, thirteen thousand two hundred dwelling-houses, four hundred streets. Of the six-and-twenty wards it utterly destroyed fifteen, and left eight others shattered and half burnt. The ruins of the City were four hundred and thirty-six acres, from the Tower by the Thames side to the Temple Church, and from the north-east along the City wall to Holborn Bridge.”

A monument which has occasioned acrimonious debates in Parliament is the Eros fountain—the Shaftesbury Memorial—in Piccadilly Circus. It was urged that especially on New Year's Eve this statue was apt to be damaged by the hordes of young students and other roysterers who climbed all over it. The contention was as hotly denied ; but the result was that a police patrol was detailed to watch this piece of statuary at this the busiest spot of the busiest city in Europe.

At Theobald's Park, two miles south-west of Cheshunt, in East Hertfordshire, the authentic Temple Bar, which formerly marked the entry to the City of London in Fleet Street, was given a quiet home. This somewhat cumbersome structure became something of

an obstruction to the ever-increasing traffic in the metropolis. Incidentally, the heads of criminals, which used to be exposed here as a deterrent from crime, are now more discreetly disposed of.

"Fief Benval ou l'Espresses" is the name of a long stone bench at Les Sages, near St. Pierre du Bois, Rocgaine Castle, on the island of Guernsey. The "*Guide to Guernsey*" gives the account of it:

"The raised seat in the centre is occupied, when the Court sits, by the Seigneur's Seneschal, with his vavassors on each side. The round seat is for the prevot who can turn freely on it to listen to all that is said; his clerk occupies the seat below. These courts, of which there are several in the island, are a remarkable survival of feudal times. The seigneur of the fief holds a court, generally once yearly, when the owners holding land under him have to appear. Their non-appearance is punishable."

Alnwick Castle, near Alnwick, the historic residence of the Duke of Northumberland, is described as the "proudest" of British castles. It boasts a collection of most amusing curios.

In the Royal Pavilion at Brighton, in the banquetting hall, there hangs one of the most costly lustres, or chandeliers. It is 30 feet high and 12 feet across at its largest diameter; it weighs over a ton and consists of two sections, connected with each other by richly gilt chains. It is described by Brayley in his "*History of the Palace*," published some hundred years ago.

"The upper division is, apparently, formed of conjoined links of pearls and rubies, diverging to a horizontal star, below which is a radiant circle of open flowers and bands of pearls, combined with festoons of sparkling jewellery. The lower division consists of a vast bulb, gradually expanding, composed of seeming pearls and connected with six large dragons from whose upturned mouths proceed as many lotus flowers (of ground glass slightly tinted), the expressive Eastern emblems of perfection and brightness. Festoons of pearls, with rosettes, stars, etc., and tassels of brilliant drops complete the form of this unique ornament."

The whole thing gives a first impression as of a fountain, or cascade of shimmering crystal.

In 1835, in the middle of the night, one of the Ladies of the Court of Queen Adelaide screamed out aloud in her sleep. She explained afterwards that she had been dreaming that in the middle of one of the state banquets the chandelier fell down. King William IV heard of this dream and had the precious ornament removed.

It was not until 1863 that, by order of Queen Victoria, it was replaced.

The salon of the Pavilion is one of the most magnificent apartments in the whole of Britain.



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Peter Pan, the hero of what is one of the most charming children's books of all time, used to live at Peter-Pan House, near Lancaster Gate, Kensington Gardens. Children may find their hero—in bronze—on his enchanting pedestal among his playmates, near the fountains in the Gardens.

"The Room of the Three Kings" is to be found at Dacre, in Cumberland. It was here that Constantine, King of Scotland, his son Eugenius, King of Cumberland and Athelstan, King of England, met in congress in 934.

In the Court House at Oakham, a market town in Rutland—a Norman hall—one may see a large number of horse-shoes which are used as mural decorations. These have been presented by rulers and queens who have passed through the town on their journeyings. Among the others are horse-shoes given by Queen Elizabeth, Queen Victoria and Queen Alexandra.

The well-known dogs' cemetery in Hyde Park, London, where devoted dog-lovers have seen their faithful friends laid to rest, is by no means the only memorial in Britain dedicated to brave domestic animals. In Westminster Abbey, on the sarcophagus of the Countess of Sussex, who died in 1589, the memory of a porcupine has been perpetuated; and the tombs of some of the Kings also carry dedications to their horses.

In Shugborough Park six miles from Stafford, alongside the triumphful arch in memory of the famous navigator Vice-Admiral George Baron Anson, there is a monument to a cat, who was his faithful comrade throughout his travels round the globe: here one may see the urn with her ashes and her portrait.

This cat was the first animal to complete the voyage round the world, and one must admit that she merits this really touching tribute to the Admiral's staunch, storm-tossed companion in danger.

On the highest ground in the City of London, opposite the General Post Office, there sits a boy on a pannier, or basket. He is the "Naked Boy of Panyer Alley." In the 18th century there were three "Naked Boy Courts," and two "Naked Boy Yards" in London. The last surviving Naked Boy Court, on the north side of Ludgate Hill, was renamed "Boy Court," but the old sign remains as a memento of the earlier name.

One of the most honoured relics, for which all the peoples of the world envy Britain, is the house in Henley Street, Stratford-on-Avon, where the greatest poet of all time was born on April 23rd, 1564. On the walls of the birth-chamber the names of Scott, Carlyle, Thackeray, Kean, Browning have been inscribed as a perpetual tribute of honour and admiration.

It is in the back room of the house that the famous portrait of the Bard hangs.

In the Church of the Trinity one may see the graves of William

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and his wife Anne, of his daughter Susan Hall and his son-in-law, Dr. Hall, of Thomas Nash, the first husband of his granddaughter Elisabeth, and also of John Combe the monylender.

The foundation walls of Shakespeare's house and the garden, with its fountains, are still intact. One may also see the shoots of Shakespeare's mulberry tree, which the Rev. Francis Gastrell, who lived there, had cut down in the year 1756, because the endless stream of pilgrims to this relic robbed him of his rest by night as well as by day.

When, in later life, Shakespeare returned to his native place, he lived at New Place, Stratford-on-Avon, and it was here that he died on April 23rd, 1616. This is kept as a second Shakespeare Museum.

Mrs. Baker, a descendant of the Hathaway family, still lives in Anne Hathaway's cottage at Shottery, where Shakespeare wooed his future wife. One may still see an old chair belonging to Anne, a carved bed, some linen, and other relics. In the Church at Luddington, one may stand on the very spot where Shakespeare was married.

At Charlecot, near Stratford-on-Avon, there is a collection of curiosities which remind one of the scene when Shakespeare was arrested by Sir Thomas Lucy for poaching.

The only extant letter written to Shakespeare has been preserved in the museum at his birthplace in Stratford-on-Avon. It was written to him by Richard Quincy, from the "Bell" Yard, Carter Lane, London.

In Birmingham there is a statue of Joseph Priestley, the famous chemist (1733-1804), who was also for many years a pastor in the unitarian church in that city. In the year 1791, on the occasion of the "Church and King" riot, his house, and with it all his priceless apparatus and books, was burnt by the mob. The scientist barely escaped with his life.

On the gate-house of the Manor House there one may read the inscription :

"In the year 1718  
ALEXANDER POPE  
finished here the  
fifth volume of Homer."

In Lombard Street, Binfield, in Berkshire, they will still show you a room in the house where Pope used to live as a young lad. Here his father carried on the trade of linendraper, while he, at the early age of 12 years had already his "beautiful effusion"—as it has been called—"Solitude" to his credit.

There is a hut which serves as a museum at Alloway, in Ayrshire. It was in this hut that Robert Burns was born in 1759.

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Many mementos of his life and work have been collected and housed here, but others are to be found in the City Museum in Edinburgh, and also at Kilmarnock. There is another interesting hut near Foulshiels, three miles from Selkirk, near Galashiels, on Yarrow Water. This was the birthplace of Mungo Park (1771-1805), the celebrated traveller, and this also serves as a museum for relics of the man and his life.

There are many mementos of Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881) preserved in the place where he was born and died—Ecclefechan near Kirtle Bridge, in Dumfriesshire.

Mrs. Constable Maxwell Scott is a direct descendant of the novelist, Scott. She lives at Abbotsford, his former residence, in north-west Roxburghshire, two miles west of Melrose, on the right bank of the River Tweed. The study, library and many other things have been preserved to the present day just as they were in Scott's own time.

In the churchyard at Birchington, in Kent, there is a monument surmounted by a cross, which bears the inscription :

"Here lieth Gabriel Charles Dante Rosetti, honoured under the name of Dante Gabriel Rosetti among painters as a painter, and among poets as a poet. Born in London of parentage mainly Italian, 12th May, 1828, died at Birchington, 9th April, 1882."

Wordsworth's "literary" home, "Dove Cottage," near Grasmere, in north-west Westmoreland, near the north-east corner of the lake of Windermere, has been preserved in its entirety as a national museum. Wordsworth lived here with his sister Dorothy in 1799. In 1802 he married. His best poems were written while he was here, and were inspired by the happy companionship which he there enjoyed. The garden has also been kept as it was, so far as is possible.

"Beneath these fruit-tree boughs that shed  
Their snow-white blossoms on my head."

No. 16 Holles Street, near Oxford Street, in the West End of London, was the birthplace of Byron; to-day, however, the house bears the number 24. At the age of six weeks he was christened in the Marylebone Church, Marylebone Road, London. His satires were published in 1809; at that time he was living at 8 St. James's Street, S.W.1, where "he woke up on that historic morning to find himself famous." Unfortunately this house of literary associations has not been preserved. It was at No. 2 Albany Street, N.W.1 that he wrote "*The Ode on the Fall of Napoleon*." And from here, on January 2nd, 1815, he married Miss Milbanke. His only daughter was born at 13 Piccadilly Terrace, now 139 Piccadilly, near Park Lane.

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At 50a Ablemarle Street, Piccadilly, London (the house of John Murray, the publisher), among many other valuable literary curiosities, one may see a number of Byron relics.

Mr. R. W. Hughes, of Birmingham, has in his possession no less than 3,000 first editions of Dickens' works.

The Dickens' Museum, at 393 Commercial Road, Portsmouth, the house in which he was born, houses over a hundred books and over two hundred portraits.

At Churchill, in Worcestershire, one of the show-places is a manor which was formerly (1429-1606) the property of the Dickens family of Bobbington (in Staffordshire). These were ancestors of the famous Dickens.

The earliest English journalist was Daniel Defoe, who was a regular contributor to the first periodical, "*The Review*." It was published in Bristol from the year 1704 onwards. It was not till he was sixty years old that Defoe met the famous sailor Alexander Selkirk, and it was from this meeting that he drew the inspiration for his "*Robinson Crusoe*." A ship's chest, preserved at the National Museum of Antiquities in Edinburgh, is his memorial, apart from the book.

The boys and girls of England set up an obelisk to the memory of Daniel Defoe, in Bunhill Fields, in the City of London.

The ship in which the great navigator Cook sailed round the world may be seen in the museum at Whitby, in the North Riding of Yorkshire.

One of the exhibits in the Science Museum, at South Kensington, is "Murdoch's little three-wheeled locomotive" which he constructed in 1786; another is Trevithick's engine, built in 1801.

At Bank Top Station, Darlington, in Durham, one may see the first British locomotive to pull a passenger train. Its first journey, in 1825, was between Stockton and Darlington. It was Stephenson himself who named her "Locomotion"; he might justly be proud of her speed of 16 miles per hour—at eight tons. The "Rocket" is often erroneously described as Stephenson's first steam engine, but actually it was not built till some years later, at a cost of £500. The "Rocket," which inaugurated the line between Liverpool and Manchester in 1830, may be seen also in the Kensington Museum, which houses the "Great Britain," the first screw steamship to make an Atlantic crossing, in the year 1843.

There is a miniature railway between Blaenau Festiniog and Portmadoc, on the Welsh highlands in Carnarvonshire. This is the smallest railway in Europe.

At "Hall i' the Wood," Bolton-le-Moors, in South Lancashire, the house where Compton lived, and perfected his spinning machine in 1770, has been preserved as a museum.

In the village of Willersley Castle, near Cromford in Derbyshire,

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the toys, which fill one whole room, and the plastic representation of London during the Great Fire of 1666.

Those with a penchant for criminology, provided they have also influence with the world-famous police at Scotland Yard, London, will find there, in the Black Museum, many an interesting sidelight on the life of England's underworld.

The Jesuit College at Stonyhurst, four miles south-west of Clitheroe, in north-east Lancashire, includes a remarkable museum of objects of historic interest.

The Museum of the Record Office in Fetter Lane, London, contains many interesting documents relating to important events in the history of Britain. For instance, one may see here the letters patent of John Baliol, notifying that he had sworn fealty to Edward I as sovereign lord of Scotland (1242); letters from Nelson; the log of the "Victory," recording the Battle of Trafalgar; a despatch telling of the Battle of Waterloo, signed by Wellington; the anonymous letter to Lord Monteagle which led to the unmasking of the Gunpowder Plot. Guy Fawkes' own signature may also be seen here.

Other documents preserved at the Record Office Museum are :

The proceedings of a lawsuit in the year 1612, with a deposition signed by Shakespeare; a petition from the American Congress to King George III; the famous Domesday Book—the register of landed property drawn up in 1086 by William the Conqueror.

There is a collection of Indian curiosities at Powys Castle, the seat of the Earl of Powis, one mile south of Welshpool in Montgomeryshire. These treasures were brought to England by Lord Clive, an ancestor of the present Earl.

Those who are interested in seeing a magnificent collection of Irish antiquities should pay a visit to the Natural History Museum in Dublin. Notable exhibits there are : the Ardagh Chalice, made of gilt and enamelled metalwork; a long cross, made at Roscommon in 1120; St. Patrick's Bell, a square iron bell which was bestowed on the Church of Armagh by St. Columba in 446; St. Patrick's manuscript of the Gospels; a Psalter of St. Columba; and many others. Here too one finds a fine collection of skulls.

The finest collection of pictures in Britain outside the metropolis is that of the Duke of Rutland, and is housed at Belvoir Castle, near Grantham. The collection includes masterpieces by Rubens, Gainsborough, and other famous painters.

The picture in which the largest number of portraits from life are brought together on one canvas is "*Derby Day*," painted in 1856 by W. P. Frith, which now hangs in the National Gallery, London.

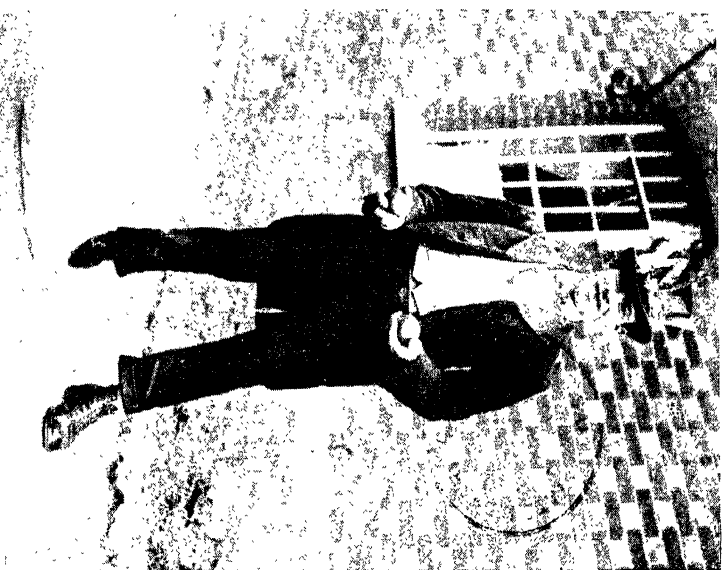
The famous Warwick Vase stands in the Conservatory of



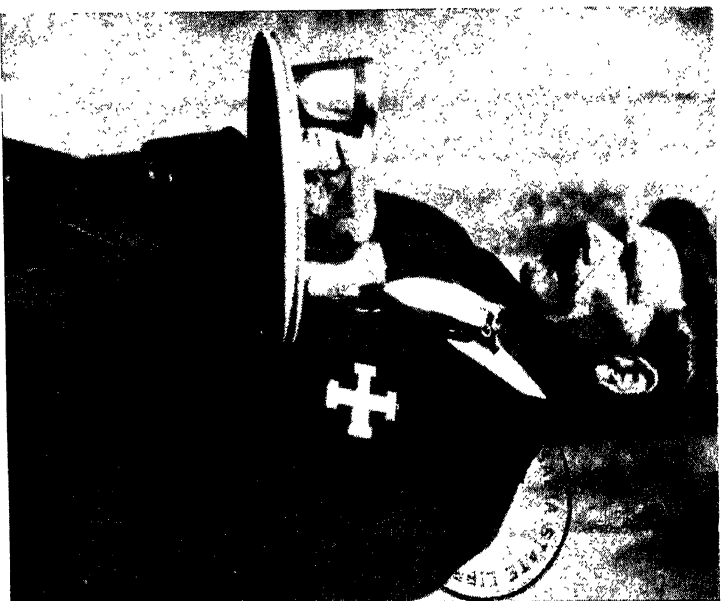
LVII. THE TICHBORNE DOLE



LVIII. THE HORN DANCE, ABBOTS BROMLEY



LIX. THE ORANGE SCRAMBLER



LX. FREE BREAD AND BEER, THE TRAVELLERS'  
DOLE AT ST. CROSS

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Warwick Castle. It was found, in 1774, at the bottom of a lake near the Emperor Hadrian's villa at Tivoli.

One of the finest of the world's collections of sculptured stones is to be seen in the village of Meigle, near the River Isla in Perthshire, Scotland.

In the Picture Gallery of Holyrood Palace, Edinburgh, one may see the portraits of Scottish kings—but they were painted "freely" and not from life.

Rembrandt's landscape picture, "*Famous Mill*," hangs in the Marquess of Lansdowne's mansion at Bowood, near Chippenham in North Wiltshire, two miles south-west of Calne. Holbein's "*Portrait of Erasmus*" hangs at Longford Castle, the seat of the Earl of Radnor. Here too there is a steel chair which was originally presented to the Austrian Emperor Rudolf II by the German town of Augsburg. The "Imperial Steel Chair," consists of some 130 sections, in each of which is a group of figures in relief, and portraying some of the outstanding events in the history of Rome and of the Holy Roman Empire.

Eight miles south-east of Chesterfield, in East Derbyshire, is Hardwick Hall, the renaissance mansion of the Duke of Devonshire, which houses a picture gallery with 25,000 window panes.

The most remarkable collection of weapons is that which is to be seen at the Wallace Collection, at Hertford House, Manchester Square, London. There is, however, only one single English helmet in the collection, a tilting helmet dating from the year 1515.

In Scotland's largest library, the Advocates' Library in Edinburgh, one may see a manuscript of "*Waverley*," and a copy of the first printed Bible also a *confessio fidei* signed by James I in 1590.

One of the most interesting libraries in Europe is that at Durham Cathedral. Apart from priceless manuscripts and Anglo-Saxon choir vestments of great rarity, one may see the sacred relics which were found in the coffin of St. Cuthbert. Here too there is a Bishop's throne which also serves as a grave-monument. Bishop Hatfield had this erected for himself. It is here too that one finds the celebrated "Blue Cross"—the mark past which no woman was allowed to pass. Another object of interest is a door-knocker on the Cathedral door, which was used by "wanted" miscreants who came here to claim sanctuary at the shrine of St. Cuthbert.

In the library of the Heralds' College in Queen Victoria Street, London, the sword, dagger and ring of King James IV of Scotland have been preserved. There too one may see the genealogical tree of the Anglo-Saxon Kings—starting from Adam.

Translations of the Bible into most languages can be obtained at the bookshop of the British and Foreign Bible Society in Queen Victoria Street, London.



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Priceless copies of the earliest books may be seen at Trinity College, Dublin, including "*The Book of Kells*," the "*Book of Durrow*" (650!) and the "*Book of Armagh*." The Dublin Museum includes amongst its exhibits one of the most complete collections of skulls.

For several centuries, the world-famous five Raphael gobelins, unique among European tapestries, were preserved at Ford Abbey, in Dorset. The designs were painted by Raphael at the request of the Pope Leo. Charles I bought these masterpieces on the advice of Rubens, and transferred them from Brussels to England in 1630. First they were hung in Whitehall, and then, from the time of William III until 1815, at Hampton Court Palace. Now they may be seen and admired at the Victoria and Albert Museum in Kensington, London.

The Manor House, 24 Cheyne Walk, Chelsea, London, was the "birth-place" of what afterwards became the greatest of the world's museums. It was here that Sir Thomas Sloane inaugurated the collection, which he presented to form the nucleus of the British Museum collection, then in the process of foundation.

Now as regards the British Museum itself.

This is no place to attempt, even cursorily, an enumeration of all the marvels of this palace of wonders. And it is hard to know where to begin when confronted by this tremendous collection of curiosities and treasures from all corners of the earth. Here one finds the finest fruits of the cultures of all times and peoples. There are the famous pencil-drawings of the monk Matthew of Paris, dating from 1230; the oldest Greek text of the Bible, the Codex Sinaiticus, from the 4th century; a Hebrew Pentateuch from the 9th century, the oldest extant manuscript of the Old Testament. Here is a mortgage letter of Shakespeare's; Nelson's orders at the Battle of Trafalgar; the oldest printed calendar, dated 1474, and printed at Nuremberg in Germany. Here is the letter which the Duke of Wellington wrote before the Battle of Waterloo; Lady Jane Grey's prayer-book; the prayer-book which Queen Elizabeth herself wrote; the first Bible, printed in 1455 by Gutenberg at Mainz; the first book with its date inscribed (1457), the first book with copper engravings, namely the *Monte Santo di Dio*, Florence, 1477; the first book in cursive writing, "*Virgil*," published at Venice in 1501. The first book printed in England, "*The Dictes and Sayinges of the Philosophers*," 1477; the oldest hunt-book, "*The Book of St. Albans*"; the first English Bible; the oldest Scottish and Irish printing; the first printed Greek book; Laskavi's "*Greek Grammar*," Milan, 1476.

Here one may see the original manuscript of the oldest British song, composed by the monk, John of Fornsete, in 1230, at the Abbey at Reading:

## FOLLYS AND CURIOUS RELICS

"Summer is icumen in  
Loudly sing cuckoo  
Groweth seed and bloweth mead  
And springs the woodland new  
Sing cuckoo. Ewe now blatet after lamb  
Loweth after the cow  
Bullock sterteth  
Buck now verteth  
Merrily sing, Cuckoo!  
Cuckoo! Cuckoo!  
Thou sing's well Cuckoo!  
Nor cease thou never now!"

There are a number of catalogues and departmental catalogues of the treasures of this Museum par excellence, and in them one may find the fullest information on all subjects. To make anything like a satisfactory tour of the Museum, one requires at least a week—and then another such visit after a month, and so on and so forth.

After the Library of the British Museum and the Bodleian at Oxford, the University Library at Cambridge, recently rehoused in a striking modern building, with its half a million volumes and three thousand manuscripts, ranks next in importance and size among British libraries. Among other treasures, it is the proud possessor of the Gospel manuscript from the 6th century; Wycliffe's parchment manuscript of his translation of the Bible; a Persian manuscript, "*The Wonders of Creation*," from the year 1388, and a folio volume with etchings by Rembrandt.

The Bank of England Museum includes a bank note, issued in the year 1828, printed for one penny, in error. At the same time four bank notes of one million pounds each were printed. Of these, one is in the possession of the Royal Family; a second is held by Lord Rothschild and the remaining two are in the museum. The first five-pound note, dated April 15th, 1793, was left as a legacy to the Museum by a collector.

The Bank is patrolled every night by Grenadier Guardsmen. This practice dates from the year 1780, when, during the Gordon Riots, an attack was made on the building.

The doors of the strong room at the Bank guard the largest vaults in the world. They weigh four tons apiece.

Stanton Harcourt, near Oxford, derives its name from the rallying cry with which the General encouraged Captain Harcourt in the heat of battle: "Stan' to un, Harcourt! Stan' to un, Harcourt!"

Brasenose College, Oxford, gets its name from a door-knocker in the form of a large bronze nose, which may still be seen there.

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It was the hare-huntsman's cry, "So-ho," which gave the name to the restaurant quarter of London known as Soho, and the streets of the same name which lie behind Regent Street in the West End of London.

Swansea, which lies on the Gower Peninsular in Glamorgan, derives its name from the Danish pirate Swayne, who, in the 10th century, had his hiding place there at "Swayne's Eye."

The Devonshire seaside resort of Westward Ho! is named after Charles Kingsley's novel of the same name. It lies on the east side of Bideford Bay, three miles north-west of Bideford.

Of all curious places, the most curious in England is, beyond a doubt, Tussaud's exhibition of wax figures near Baker Street, London. A visit is especially to be recommended to those who are interested in seeing "living"—or at least lifelike—reproductions of the great ones of the earth. Those who have particularly steady nerves should not fail to pay a visit to the "Chamber of Horrors" at the same time, to have a look at the world's worst criminals.

## CHAPTER XIV

### PHYSICAL CURIOSITIES

ONE of the chief wonders of Great Britain is, beyond a doubt, the remarkable Giant's Causeway, four miles north-north-east of Bushmills, in Ireland. Here the large columnar basalt rocks form a low mole, separating Port Ganny from Port Noffer, and a whole system of enchantingly beautiful promontories and caverns. Many legends have grown up round these strange natural structures, among which the most widely accepted tells how Fin MacCoil, a valiant Hibernian giant, designed this as a bridge to Scotland, over which he might sally forth to slay a formidable hostile neighbour: the crags and caverns are all that now remain to testify to the grandeur of that mightily conceived structure. There are about 50,000 granite columns, closely packed together, generally polygonal in form, and for the most part six-sided. The greatest length is 700 feet, the greatest breadth 350 feet and the greatest height 33 feet—fit building material for a giant.

The Giant's Causeway consists of three "piers" or "moles," known respectively as the Little, the Middle and the Great Causeway, each jutting out into the sea. The Middle Causeway is also known as the "Honeycomb," a name easily explained by the prevailing hexagonal form of the rocks. On it stands a group of rocks, a central hexagonal pillar surrounded by others to give the form of a handsome arm-chair, commonly known as the "Lady's Wishing Chair."

Near by is one of the most beautiful of the world's amphitheatres, in this case a natural one, known as the Giant's amphitheatre. It made a great impression on the German travel-book writer, Kohl, who says of it:

"The bay called the Giant's Amphitheatre is certainly the most beautiful amphitheatre in the world, that in Rome not excepted. The form of it is so exactly half a circle that no architect could have possibly made it more so, and the cliff slopes at precisely the same angle all round to the centre. Round the upper part runs a row of columns 80 feet high; then comes a broad rounded projection, like an immense bench for the accommodation of the giant guests of Fin MacCoil; then again a row of pillars, 60 feet high, and then again a gigantic bench, and so down to the bottom, where the water is enclosed by a circle of black boulder stones, like the limits of the arena. This is a scene in speaking of which no

traveller need fear indulging in terms of exaggeration, for all he can say must remain far behind the truth."

Within easy access from here, by boat, is Portcoon Cave, a large cavern 45 feet high and 350 feet long, formed of stones described as "mill wheels." The Guide Book tells us: "The spheroidal structure is perfectly well defined, the outer surface presenting a roughly tessellated appearance. The largest is about 25 feet in diameter, and a little more in length."

Next one should explore the Dunkerry Cave, sometimes called the Grand Cave. This penetrates 700 feet into the rock and even at high water measures 60 feet in height. The entrance looks like a gothic archway and one of the main curiosities of the place is the echo which one hears there. The cave can be reached only by boat: as the tide outside rises, the water inside the cave also rises, and that so quickly that people who are not familiar with the place and happen to be inside the cave just before high tide are afraid of being trapped between the rising waters and the rocky roof. Actually, however, the cavity is never completely submerged.

Three miles east of the famous sea-side resort of North Berwick, in East Lothian, Scotland, is the massive Bass Rock. It rears itself 350 feet above the surface of the sea and measures a mile in circumference. But the most interesting feature is a long, cavernous underground passage, which one may explore at low tide, traversing the rock from east to west. It was in this inhospitable prison that the Stuarts kept their captive Covenanters, but in our own time it serves at a home for myriads of water fowl and aquatic birds. Here the main body of Europe's Solan geese have their habitat.

Near the village of Cheddar—incidentally the original home of the Cheddar Cheese—two and a half miles south-east of Axbridge, in mid-Somerset, is the famous Cheddar Gorge. Collinson describes it as follows:

"... running across the south-west ridge of the hill from top to bottom, extending in a north-east winding direction more than a mile in length, and then branching off by two passages in the form of the capital letter Y by an easy ascent to the top of the Mendip. Proceeding up this winding passage, the cliffs rise on either hand in the most picturesque forms, some of them being 800 feet high, terminating in craggy pyramids. On the right several of them are perpendicular to the height of 400 feet, resembling the shattered battlements of vast castles. On the left hand, or west side, are two especially of this form, which lean over the road beneath with the most threatening aspect, while the tops of many others project over with grandeur."

Some hundred years ago a whole series of highly interesting caves were discovered here. The first of the Cheddar Caves has one main porch and four lateral branches, which are, however,

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merely narrow fissures, twelve feet broad and 40 feet high. These caves are completely encrusted with fantastically shaped stalactites and stalagmites and fossil remains. A second cave is known as the "Fairy Grotto"; and a third has long been famous as sheltering the fossilised remains of birds and animals. But there are many other caverns besides in this immediate neighbourhood, with their stalactites and stalagmites giving the impression of "a sea of dazzling whiteness" or hanging like "muslin draperies and festoons."

It was in the year 1905 that there was discovered here a veritable forest of these geological phenomena, a "dazzling mass of kaleidoscopic beauty." But the most interesting discovery made here was that of the skeleton of a cave-man, together with flints and many other prehistoric relics of the Palaeolithic and Neolithic eras.

As is to be expected, most of the age-old castles in Britain have their secret chambers and concealed passages. Perhaps most famous of all are the subterranean paths at Norwich Castle, and in the ruins of Prudhoe Castle at Prudhoe, eleven miles west of Newcastle, one of the seats of the Duke of Northumberland.

The rock of Nottingham Castle, against which, incidentally, is propped up the ancient inn of the "Trip to Jerusalem"—claiming to have been established in the days of the Vikings—also conceals within itself a whole series of secret passages and chambers. Innumerable stories have gained currency about these gloomy subterranean apartments. Here, too, one may see "Mortimer's Hole," through which King Edward III forced an entry into the castle when he guided his father's murderer, Roger Mortimer, on his way.

At Pembroke Castle, a spiral staircase brings one to the celebrated "Wogan's Hole." Pembroke is full of people who will tell you the authentic story of this hiding place: but no one version is anything like any other; for it seems that each successive generation has improved on the tradition of the previous one. Suffice it to mention in passing that, among other stories, it is claimed that this was actually the site of the barbarous treatment by Bluebeard, of his luckless wives.

In the west of Ireland, in the Parish of Cong, there is a subterranean river. Edmund Vale, in the Supplement to "*John O'London's Weekly*" of June 20th, 1936, explains that—

"This is the large subterranean river by which the waters of Lough Mask discharge into Lough Corrib in the far west of Ireland. One bank of this river is accessible by a staircase to which you gain entry through an inconspicuous hole in the middle of a field in the parish of Cong. Although the depth of the river is considerable, the salmon will not use it to ascend from Lough Corrib (where they abound) into the upper lake, fearing the dark.

"These features, however, are only one part of our curiosity. In the fearful famine of the 'forties,' the English Government, wishing to provide employment, conceived one of those strange brain-waves which were often inspired by Irish affairs. It was thought that although salmon would not go into Lough Mask, shipping might. Works were therefore put in hand for an important canal to be made through which barges and small craft from the sea could enter a sumptuous harbour basin at Ballinrobe adjacent to the south-east corner of Lough Mask. The canal was duly built, with its bridges, its quays, and its lock-gates—you may see them there to-day. The harbour at Ballinrobe with its bollards and its mooring rings stands ready to receive shipping from Galway Town and the outside world. But not a single craft has ever come there, for the water refused to stay in the bottom of the canal. It preferred to go its ancient way secretly underground."

There is a "real," albeit a very modest, volcano on British soil, to be seen nine miles north-west of Whitby, near the fishing village of Staithes, on the coast of Yorkshire. It is now known as the Boulby Cliff: for more than fifty years it was an active volcano, belching out fire and ashes, and even to-day its peak, some 670 feet high, may be seen to smoke. It was at the feet of this landmark that the famous navigator James Cook received his training as a seaman.

Near the Hunter Rock on the Isle of Man there is a submerged magnetic rock. Fortunately its influence is effective only within a small circle, but none the less it affects iron. The crews of ships which have gone out of their course in this vicinity tell weird stories of heavy iron tackle on board suddenly jumping about, and of the havoc wrought with compasses and watches.

The village of Symond's Gate (or Yat) lies on the border between Herefordshire and Gloucestershire, four miles north-east of Monmouth. There one should go for a walk along the banks of the River Wye and carefully watch the river as it flows along. Suddenly, a few minutes' walk from the village, one will stand still, amazed, scarcely trusting one's eyesight: surely the river flows uphill! In fact, one should not trust one's eyes: it is only an optical delusion.

A shock also awaits the inexperienced motorist on the road to Turnberry, six miles north of Girvan on the Ayrshire coast. If one may trust one's usually reliable eyes, here one sees the road commence to ascend: yet the contrary is the fact. Again it is the eyes that are playing their little tricks.

On Worms Head, on the Gower Peninsula, eight miles west of Oxwich, in Glamorgan, there is a blow hole. When there is a high wind, or when the sea is running strongly, one hears a whistling sound through it, a similar effect to that produced in the Devil's

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Bellows at Kynance Cove, in south-west Cornwall, one and a half miles north-west of Lizard Point.

"Nutcrackers" is the name given to a rock near Lustleigh in Devonshire, three miles south of Moreton Hampstead. It sways a little, so that people say that nuts could be cracked between the two sections.

Logan Rock is a mass of granite weighing some 1,400 hundred-weight, which can likewise be made to sway, since its base is unequally supported.

Logan Lady, also in this district, is another unsteady stone.

The largest flower market in Great Britain, and indeed in the world, is that of Covent Garden, London.

A most costly and exquisite exhibition of flowers takes place annually in the garden of Chelsea Hospital. It is one of the important functions of the London season, and the dresses worn by the women visitors share the honours with the rare and lovely blooms. Profits of the Chelsea Flower Show go to the Treasury of the Hospital.

Great Britain also possesses the largest zoological gardens in the world. One section is in Regent's Park, London, and the other (opened in 1931) at Whipsnade, in Bedfordshire. It is a "sanctuary" for native wild birds and wild flowers. The animals have the greatest freedom, and are seen in what approximates to their natural surroundings.

In London, too, one finds the largest aquarium in the world. And Kew Gardens, on the outskirts of the metropolis, near the Thames, must be counted among the wonders of the world. It is the most marvellous tree and flower garden in the world—the father of all gardens, including the largest herbarium ever made, with its three million and more specimens of different plants. And the Museum of Economic Botany may claim the title to being the oldest in the world, having been founded in 1848.

"Come down to Kew in lilac-time

And you shall wander hand in hand with love in summer's wonderland.

The nightingale is rather rare and yet they say you'll hear him there

At Kew, at Kew in lilac-time (and oh, so near to London!).

The linnet and the throstle, too, and after dark the long halloo,  
And golden-eyed tu-whit, tu-whoo of owls that lodge in London.

For Noah hardly knew a bird of any kind that isn't heard

At Kew, at Kew in lilac-time (and oh, so near to London!).

And when the rose begins to pout and all the chestnut spires are out

You'll hear the rest without a doubt, all chorusing for London."



There is, perhaps, only one other garden in the world which may seriously be considered as a rival to Kew, and that is the Buitenzorg Garden in Java.

Near Maple Hayes, in Staffordshire, is the Botanic Garden laid out by Erasmus Darwin, grandfather of the famous Charles.

The largest private collection of animals and birds in Europe is, perhaps, to be found in the park of Woburn Abbey, in Bedfordshire, 42 miles from London, the famous seat of the Duke of Bedford. A similar claim is made for Sir Garrard Tyrwhitt-Drake's private zoo at Cobtree Manor near Maidstone. It was founded by a Norman baron whose father had come over to England with the Conqueror. Among other precious works of art, the Lanius vase from Hadrian's villa in Rome was brought here in 1800. Collectors have placed a high value on a singular literary work which was written in this park, namely "*Verses written in the portico of the temple of Liberty at Woburn Abbey*" of which only 50 copies were printed by James Moyes in 1836.

Probably the most comprehensive private zoological garden which was not designed for commercial purposes is that belonging to Lord Rothschild on his estate at Tring Park, near Tring in Hertfordshire, seven miles south-east of Aylesbury. Here the acclimatisation of even such exotic animals as kangaroos has been effected. Members of the family who hunted in the Snow Mountains in southern Dutch New Guinea contributed a handsome bag to this collection, although unfortunately many of the animals died on the journey to England. In 1889 Lord Rothschild inaugurated the Rothschild Museum, comprising, among other notable exhibits, a collection of woods, cabinets of entomological specimens, a taxidermist's workshop and other apparatus of the biologist.

The two most historic trees in Britain are :

Merlin's Oak, Carmarthen. Legend avers that under this oak Merlin was wont to sit; he was the wizard at King Arthur's Court.

Royal Oak at Boscobel, standing three and a half miles north of Albington, near the historic Boscobel House. It was here that Charles II hid himself, under the guidance of the Earl of Derby, on his flight after the Battle of Worcester on September 3rd, 1651. He was concealed in the house in a cavity to which a small trap door gave access. When search was made for the King, he escaped through a secret passage connected with the chimney and took refuge in the oak which stood near the house.

The house, the bedroom and the oak have been preserved to our own day. In 1817 Frances Evans put up a strong iron palisading round the oak to protect it. To-day the tree is about 11 feet in girth and 40 in height.

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The Squire's room is on the first floor of Boscobel House, and the closet in the wainscoting may be seen to the left of the fireplace. A trap door in the flooring of this closet gives access to the secret staircase, which descends inside the chimney stack and thence leads to the garden. This is the hidden passage which the King used on his flight into the forest. On the second storey one may still see the secret hiding place where he spent the night of September 6th. Thus one may conjure up a vivid picture of what happened on that historic occasion.

During the course of the past century doubts have often been expressed by different authorities as to whether this particular oak is actually still standing, or whether the King used some other tree as his hiding-place. Some claim that it was not long after the battle before relic-hunters had cut down all but the stump of the tree in their mania for collecting "lucky wood" to take into their homes. But in Blount's Book, "*Boscobel*," published nine years after the battle, it is clearly stated that the oak was then standing and flourishing.

The Rev. G. Plaxton, Rector of Donington, between the years 1690 and 1703, says: "The Royak Oak was a fair spreading tree, the boughs of it all lined and covered with ivy. Here, in the thick of these boughs, the King sat in the day-time with Colonel Carlos; so that they are strangely mistaken who judge it an old hollow oak, whereas it was a gay and flourishing tree, surrounded with a great many more. The "poor" remains of the Royal Oak are now fenced in by a handsome brick wall, at the charge of Basil Fitzherbert Esquire."

Sixty-two years after the Battle of Worcester, in his "*Visit to Boscobel*," Dr. Stukeley writes: "The tree was almost cut away by travellers, whose curiosity led them to see it. Close by the side grows a young thriving plant from one of its acorns."

In 1708 a great rarity was put up for auction at Christie's: "A portrait, the Pretender James Francis Edward, engraved on silver by Will, laid on a piece of Boscobel Oak."

The chair on which the King sat in the garden on the day after his escape, by the stone table, is still preserved, and the place at which he sat is marked with the inscription:

"Sext. id. Sept. 1651, in hac domo Carolus Secundus tutela quinque fratrum de stirpe Penderel potitus est coreomdemque ope incolumnis evasit." (On the 7th of September, 1651, Charles II, in this house obtained the protection of five brothers of the Penderel family, and by means of their help safely escaped.)

In order to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria a young oak, reared from an acorn from the Royal Oak, was planted in the Bishop of Lichfield's garden, and a plaque announces that:

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### "This Tree

A seedling from the Royal Oak in the adjoining field, was planted by Augustus, Bishop of Lichfield, as a Memorial of the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria.

The parent tree, by sheltering King Charles II, preserved the Royal Line from extinction. The daughter tree commemorates the unprecedentedly long reign about 200 years later of his illustrious Successor."

Of a young oak which stands at Dropmore, in Buckinghamshire, formerly the seat of Lady Grenville, we read :

"This Tree, raised from an Acorn of the Oak which sheltered Charles II at Boscobel, is placed and cherished here as a memorial, not of his preservation, but of the re-establishment of the Ancient and Free Monarchy of England—the true source of her prosperity and glory."

Saplings from other acorns from the old tree are to be found in St. James's Park, London, and in the United States of America.

There is another oak which had associations with one of the important battles in England's history and has thus itself become important as a historic monument. It is the famous Glendower Oak, standing by the River Severn, at Shelton, near Shrewsbury, Shropshire. Actually the tree itself is dead. It had a girth of  $44\frac{1}{2}$  feet at the base and at eight feet up of  $27\frac{1}{3}$  feet, and within its hollow bole there was room for six people to sit down to dinner. It was from this tree that Owen Glendower, the last independent Prince of Wales, watched the battle of Shrewsbury on July 21st, 1403, when the Royalists, under Henry IV, quelled the insurgents under Hotspur. Hotspur was killed and Worcester was wounded and taken prisoner. This was Henry, Prince of Wales' (Henry V's) first battle; he showed great bravery and was wounded several times. It is by this tree that the fifth act of Shakespeare's "*Henry IV, Part I*" takes place, at what is described by the poet as "The King's camp near Shrewsbury."

"The Rebels' Tree" is an oak at Clifton, in Westmorland. It marks the place where the last battle on English soil was fought: it was the fight between the Duke of Cumberland and Prince Charlie.

Shakespeare also ensured lasting fame for another tree of this species—Herne's Oak, which stood near Queen Elizabeth's Walk in the private part of the park of Windsor Castle. This tree was uprooted in 1863 and a young oak planted in its place. The former tree played quite an important rôle in "*The Merry Wives of Windsor*." Sir John Falstaff chose this as the scene of the hoaxes which he was to carry out with the help of the ladies from the

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Thames-side village of Datchet. In Act IV, Scene VI, Fenton tells the host at the Garter Inn :

“ Hark, good mine host :

To-night at Herne's Oak, just 'twixt twelve and one,  
Must my sweet Nan present the Fairy Queen. . . ”

And in Act V, Scene III, which is set in “ A Street leading to the Park,” the following dialogue takes place between Mistress Ford and Mistress Page :

“ MRS. FORD : Where is Nan now, and her troop of fairies, and the Welsh devil, Hugh?

MRS. PAGE : They are all couched in a pit hard by Herne's Oak, with obscured lights ; which, at the very instant of Falstaff's and our meeting, they will at once display to the night.

MRS. FORD : That cannot choose but amaze him.

MRS. PAGE : If he be not amazed, he will be mocked ; if he be amazed, he will every way be mocked.

MRS. FORD : We'll betray him finely.

MRS. PAGE : Against such lewdsters and their lechery,  
Those that betray them do no treachery.

MRS. FORD : The hour draws on : to the oak, to the oak ! ”

Shakespeare's partiality for oak trees is well known, but this is not the only tree of which he wrote, for almost every kind of tree and flower is mentioned in his works, and he evidently had a passionate love for gardens. The city of Birmingham may claim the distinction of having laid out a garden in which are represented all the types of plants, flowers and trees which are mentioned in Shakespeare's poems and dramas. This garden forms a special feature of Lightwoods Park, Beechlanes, Bearwood, which was bought by public subscription and opened in June, 1903. The Shakespeare garden was not opened until twelve years later, the Lord Mayor, Alderman Sir William Bowater, performing the ceremony. “ *A Complete List of Shakespeare's Plants, for use in the Shakespeare Garden at Lightwoods Park, Birmingham,* ” has been compiled and printed ; it is the work of Mr. G. Johnson, Chairman of the City of Birmingham Parks Committee. This complete catalogue of all the plants and trees mentioned in the works of the “ Swan of Avon ” occupies no less than twenty-eight pages. Another book which treats of the same subject is Eleanor Sinclair Rohde's book “ *Shakespeare's Wild Flowers, Fairy Lore, Gardens, Herbs, Gatherers of Simples and Bee Lore,* ” published by the Medici Society Ltd., of London.

The most beautiful of all Shakespearean gardens is of course that which blossoms at Stratford-on-Avon.

Its history, its cultivation and development and its tending are

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fully described in Ernest Law's book, "*Shakespeare's Garden at Stratford-on-Avon*."

But to return to famous oak trees!

At Cressage, in Shropshire, there still flourishes at this day an oak which was planted in the seventh century, to commemorate the work of peace of St. Augustine.

At Clipstone, near Ollerton in Nottinghamshire, are some ruins which are now all that remains of a palace which was once King John's favourite residence. In Sherwood Forest, near by, stands the Parliament Oak. It was beneath the leafy boughs of this tree that King John consulted his nobles when he received the news of the Welsh rebellion; and here, in the year 1290, King Edward I met his parliament in session.

The wonderful park of Knole House, the seat of Lord Sackville near Sevenoaks in Kent, encloses in its extensive grounds many red and fallow deer and other precious gifts of nature. There one may see the magnificent avenue of oaks, known as Duchess Walk; here, too, the ancient "King John's Oak" and another stately avenue, this time of beech trees, leading to the end of the ancient "Pleasance" in which is a wonderful collection of some of the rarest and oldest trees in the land. Any one of these features would be a valued ornament, but altogether they contribute to make this one of the most exquisite of the world's great estates.

In Savernake Forest, Wiltshire, on the property of the Marquess of Ailesbury, there is a whole series of ancient giant trees, among them "King's Oak," "Bravdon Oak," "Duke's Vaunt." And here also is a grand avenue four and a half miles long, which is rightly famed for its beauty.

At Polstead, near Hadleigh in Suffolk, in the picturesque valley of the River Box, the Gospel Oak is one of the centres of attraction of the district. The tree is unfortunately in an advanced stage of decay, but its former glory can be imagined: at a height of five feet it measures 33 feet round. The tree is 1,300 years old and thus claims a place among the oldest trees in Europe.

The Crouch Oak is "only" 800 years old. At a height of 24 feet it measures two yards in circumference. It stands on the land belonging to the "Princess Mary Village Homes for Girls" at Addlestone, Surrey. The oak became famous through its associations with Queen Elizabeth, who often used to sit beneath it: Wyclif used to preach there. The "Queen's Oak" in the village of Huntingfield, Suffolk, likewise has associations with Queen Elizabeth: it marks the place where she once shot a buck while hunting as Baron Hunsdon's guest.

The Bear Oak in Penshurst Park owes its fame to its beauty of form and unique position, standing as it does near the confluence

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of the Eden and the Medway. Authentic records show that it flourished as early as the year 1550.

Another famous oak is to be found in the picturesque park belonging to Henry Western Plumtre, at Fredville, a mile south of Nonington in Kent. The Fredville Oak measures 36 feet round.

George Fox used to preach by an oak, hence known as "Fox Oak," near Seven Oak, a market town five miles north-west of Northwich in Cheshire. There is also a Meeting House of the Society of Friends here.

In the hamlet of Spreyton, in Devonshire, between the Rivers Teign and Taw, eight miles east of Okehampton, is an oak which is much the subject of pilgrimages by those who love beautiful trees.

The "most-photographed" oak in Britain is without any doubt the "Round Tree" in Old Bins Wood, in the Forest of Arden between Lillington and Leamington, in Warwickshire. It happens to stand in the centre of England. It is 30 feet in girth and, since the days of Oliver Cromwell, has been surrounded by a high iron paling.

In Needwood Forest, in east Staffordshire, there are a number of interesting oaks. The forest was once an open tract of woodland, some twenty-four miles in circumference, but for the last hundred years it has been the property of one owner after another. From among the trees there we may single out the Swilcar Oak, a surpassingly beautiful tree which, at six feet, measures 22 feet in circumference.

The Walking Stick Oak, which has a high, columnar trunk and is 70 feet high, stands in Bagshot Park in Surrey, and here too we may find the Beggar's Oak (48 feet) and the Squitch Oak (61 feet).

In Hatfield Forest, near Bishops Stortford, Essex, are to be seen the fenced-in remains of a huge old tree, known as the "Doodle Oak." This is supposed to be the tree which gave its name, as the "Broad Oak" to the neighbouring Hatfield Broad Oak.

Pope's Oak is preserved in the Park of West Grinstead on the Worthing road, Sussex. It was under this tree that Pope, when a guest of John Caryl, wrote "*The Rape of the Lock*."

Another oak which was a favourite haunt of a poet is Cowper's Oak at Yardley Chase, on the road between Bedford and Northampton, one of the estates of the Marquess of Northampton.

The tree, which is 23 feet in circumference, is one of a group of three, and was formerly known by the name of Judith. It is said that long ago a certain Judith, a niece of William the Conqueror, lived at the manor of Yardley Chase and the tree was named after her, the remaining two in the trio being named Gog and Magog.

Cowper was specially fond of this neighbourhood, and of the

## 1,000 CURIOSITIES OF BRITAIN

tree Judith. In 1791 he wrote a poem about this tree, of which only fragments have been found among his notes, and which is assumed never to have been finished.

Among his notes, also, was the following entry: "Yardley Oak, in girth feet 22, inches six and a half. The oak at Yardley Lodge, feet 28, inches five."

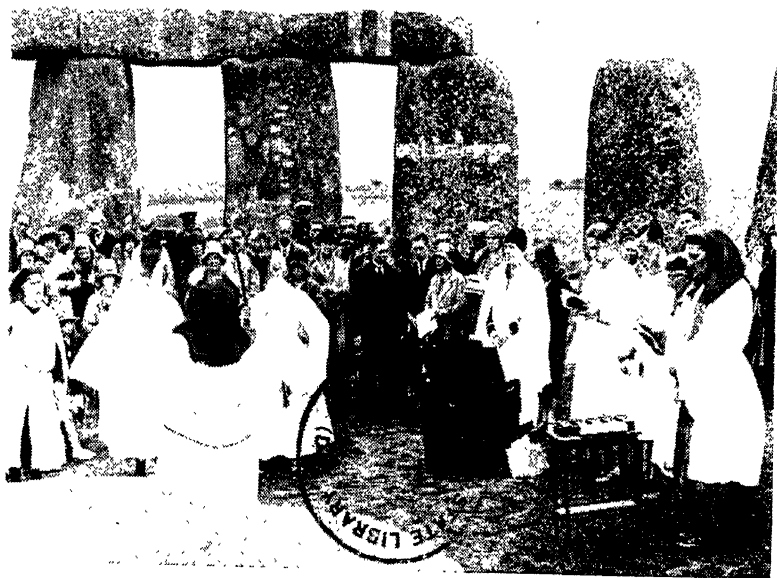
"A giant bulk,  
Of girth enormous, with moss-cushioned root  
Upheaved above the soil, and sides emboss'd  
With prominent wens globose.  
Time made thee what thou wast—King of the woods;  
And time hath made thee what thou art—a cave  
For owls to roost in."

And next to this fragment was a letter, dated September 11th, 1788, written to a friend:

"Since your departure I have twice visited the oak, and with an intention to push my inquiries a mile beyond it, where it seems I should have found another oak much larger and much more respectable than the former; but once I was hindered by the rain and once by the sultriness of the day. This oak has been known by the name of Judith many ages, and is said to have been an oak at the time of the Conquest. If I have not an opportunity to reach it before your arrival here, we will attempt that exploit together, and even should I have been able to visit it ere you come, I shall be glad to do so; for the pleasure of extraordinary sights, like other pleasures, is doubled by the participation of a friend."

Up to 150 years ago, the mulberry tree planted by Shakespeare himself in his garden at Stratford-on-Avon was still flourishing. James I encouraged all the corporations and landed proprietors of England in his day to plant mulberry trees, to furnish food for the silk worms with which he hoped to develop the silk industry. A new tree has been planted to replace the original of Shakespeare's time.

There is a famous mulberry tree—asccribed to Milton—in the garden of Christ's College, Cambridge. The mulberry tree in the gardens of Pembroke College is associated with Edmund Spenser, the poet, who was a student at the college. Still another literary craftsman, Charles Dickens, planted a mulberry tree. This was during his stay in London, at 19a Tavistock Place, Bloomsbury, a house which now belongs to the Theosophical Society. Incidentally, Dickens' London house is No. 48 Doughty Street, also in Bloomsbury, and a full account of its literary and historical associations is given in an excellent brochure. It was in the summer of 1922,

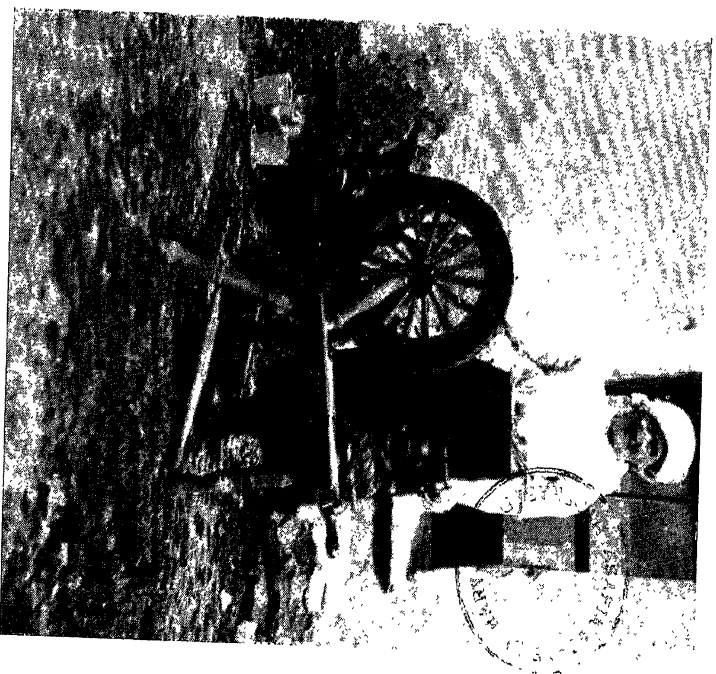


LXI. DRUID SERVICE, STONEHENGE, SALISBURY PLAIN



LXII. OVERTON MUMMERS





LXIII. AT THE SPINNING WHEEL, NEAR DUNVEGAN,  
SKYE



LXIV. A HURDLER

## PHYSICAL CURIOSITIES

when this literary monument was in danger of being pulled down that the members of the Council of Dickens' Fellowship decided to buy the house and in 1925 instituted the "Dickens House Fund" for its upkeep.

A three-hundred-year-old mulberry tree stands by the Drapers' Hall, Throgmorton Street, London, near the Bank of England.

In a great many places scattered through the length and breadth of this island, there are chestnut trees of extraordinarily entrancing beauty.

The most famous avenue in the whole of Great Britain, and possibly even in Europe, is that in Bushey Park, on the outskirts of London. William III had this avenue planted, flanked by rows of lime trees. The park covers an area of more than a thousand acres and the main avenue is 1 mile 40 yards long. The Great Basin, a fountain in the centre, is 5 feet deep and 400 feet in diameter. It was built in 1609 by the Italian sculptor Fanelly, who at that time enjoyed a world-wide reputation. Actually the basin was designed for Charles I's private garden, but was made the centre of the park in the reign of Queen Anne.

London possesses another handsome piece of architecture which has likewise "wandered," the Marble Arch at the north-east entrance to Hyde Park, at one end of Oxford Street.

It was originally intended for Buckingham Palace, was then placed at the entrance to the Park, but now stands in the middle of the roadway, as its former site became unsuitable, owing to the increase in the traffic at this point.

But we were considering chestnut trees.

The largest Spanish chestnut in Britain is the much-vaunted and oft-cited pride of Highgate Farm, near the town of Etruria, in Staffordshire. Incidentally, Etruria is the place where fifty copies of the world-renowned Barberini, or Portland Vase, were made and sold. The original, which is now in the British Museum in London, was discovered near Rome in the year 1630 and was lodged at Bulstrode Park, in Buckinghamshire, for a long time before being taken to its present home.

There is a famous "sweet," or edible chestnut tree, at Tortworth on the stream of the Avon, two and a half miles from Charfield, in Gloucestershire. It was planted before King John's accession to the throne and in the time of King Stephen was a much-frequented place of pilgrimage. It is said to have measured 60 feet at one time, though now it is only 52 feet high.

Where the Seven Sisters Road in London runs into Tottenham the seven daughters of King Robert the Bruce of Scotland are said to have planted seven elms, which were in turn called the Seven Sisters. One of them, however, stood apart from the others and was nicknamed "Judas." At the time when the Seven Sisters

Road was being laid—about 1831 to 1833—these trees disappeared, but were subsequently replaced.

Byron, when he was at school at Harrow, had a favourite elm, known as the Byron Elm. The poem in which he wrote about it is quoted in the chapter on schools.

There are three famous elms in King John's Lane, a road near Salisbury, in Wiltshire. Three hundred years ago there was also a far-famed "Weeping Cross" here, which formed a stopping place on the stage-coach route from London across country.

Near Islip Church, in Oxfordshire, is an elm which marks the spot where a weeping cross used to stand in long bygone years, and it is now known as the Cross Tree.

The most ancient and the largest yew is to be seen in the churchyard off Darley Dale, in Derbyshire. At a height of four feet from the ground its girth is 33 feet and it is over two thousand years old. During recent years this tree has lost some of its limbs. Beside it, the yew which still flourishes in the churchyard at Fortingal, on the Lyon in Perthshire, Scotland, is a mere youngster, for all its 1400 years of age and its 56 feet of girth.

In the churchyard at Twyford in Berkshire there is a carefully-tended yew "only 1,200 years old and 15 feet in circumference, closely trimmed so as to be neatly pyramidal in shape."

A thousand-year-old yew tree—an imposing age for any living thing!—is a much-prized feature of Compton Dundon in Somerset, where it graces the churchyard.

Bedfont, in Middlesex, also possesses two famous large yews. Since the year 1704 they have been kept carefully clipped in the shape of the initials of two of the wardens of that time, each surmounted by a peacock.

The most beautiful yews in the whole of Europe adorn the valley of Kingsley Bottom, at the foot of Bow Hill, a mile north of West Stoke, a parish four miles N.N.W. of Chichester, in Sussex. This valley derives its name from the Norse Kings who met their deaths here fighting against the men of Chichester in the 5th century A.D. and were buried here, their grave being a barrow forming a conspicuous landmark on the high ground to the north of the valley.

Their loveliness is rivalled by the group of clipped yews known as "The Sermon on the Mount," at Packwood, near Knowle, eight miles and threequarters from Warwick, in Warwickshire. And there are some who say that they are surpassed in beauty by the yew, measuring 33 feet in diameter, which flourishes in the churchyard of Preen, near Presthorpe, in Shropshire.

But the most famous avenue of yews, numbering over one hundred, is that which adorns the churchyard of Painswick, a village in Gloucester on the high road between Bath and Cheltenham.

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The trees are all planted in regular formation and are almost all uniformly cut.

The following paragraph is taken from the "*Observer*" of September 14th, 1933.

"To-day witnesses a curious old ceremony at Painswick. In the churchyard of the village are ninety-nine yew trees and tradition has it that all attempts to complete the hundred by planting another tree have failed, the newcomer always dying. Every year, at the Feast of the Nativity of Our Lady, September 8th, these yews are clipped, and the following Sunday is locally known as 'Clipping Sunday' when, after the morning service, the parishioners march in procession round the churchyard and then join hands and form a ring round the church. Finally they gather at the foot of a flight of steps leading to the tower door, from which a sermon is preached."

The oldest cedar in Britain is that which grows in the Royal Palace Garden at Enfield, on the New River in Middlesex, ten miles N.N.E. of London. It was planted by the botanist, Dr. Uvedale, in the year 1660, when he converted the Palace into a school.

The largest cedar is a favourite haunt of nature-lovers at Cobham, on the River Mobe, in Surrey, on the main road from London to Portsmouth.

William Pitt planted several cedars in Holwood Park, near Holwood Hill, four miles south of Bromley in Kent. Here the mansion of Holwood, built in the classic style, stands on the site of the favourite residence of William Pitt.

It is now the seat of Lord Derby. In its grounds is the "Emanicipation Oak," under which William Wilberforce and Pitt had their conference which resulted in the introduction into Parliament of the bill for the abolition of slavery. This momentous event is further commemorated by a stone seat erected by the Earl of Stanhope.

The catalpe tree in Gray's Inn, London, is a cutting from the tree planted by Francis Bacon, and slips taken from this tree are still highly prized.

In his poem, "*The Reverie of Poor Susan*," Wordsworth has perpetuated the memory of the famous plane tree at the corner of Wood Street and Cheapside, London :

"At the corner of Wood Street, when daylight appears,  
Hangs a thrush that sings loud—it has sung there for years.  
Poor Susan has passed by the spot, and has heard  
In the silence of morning the song of the bird.

'Tis a note of enchantment; what ails her? She sees  
A mountain ascending, a vision of trees;

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Bright columns of vapour through Lothbury glide,  
And a river flows on through the vale of Cheapside.

Green pastures she views in the midst of the dale,  
Down which she so often has tripped with her pail;  
And a single small cottage, a nest like a dove's,  
The one only dwelling on earth that she loves.

She looks, and her heart is in heaven; but they fade;  
The mist and the river, the hill and the shade:  
The stream will not flow, and the hill will not rise,  
And the colours have all passed away from her eyes!"

Another of his best-loved poems is, incidentally, one which he wrote about a tree: "*A Yew Tree, Pride of Lorton Vale*," at Lorton, near Cockermouth in Cumberland.

The loveliest plane tree stands in the garden of the Palace of Ely, on the Ouse in Cambridgeshire. It was planted in 1636.

The largest ash, which towers to 140 feet, is one of the numberless sights in the park of Cobham Hall, in mid-Kent, four miles south-east of Gravesend. The magnificent park covers an area of 1,800 acres.

A large number of quaint legends have been woven about the celebrated Thorn of Glastonbury, on the Brue in Somerset. For centuries a white-blossoming thorn had been a well-known feature of the slopes of Wearyall Hill, and tradition attributed its origin to Joseph of Arimathea's staff. It was said that he himself planted it there, where it burgeoned and blossomed about Christmas time year by year. The fame of the sacred plant spread abroad and sprigs of it were sent as Yuletide gifts to the Kings of England and even shipped abroad, by the merchants of Bristol, to favoured recipients overseas. For years the plant flourished, its twin stems putting forth shoots which flowered abundantly. During the Civil War, however, a Puritan soldier uprooted the plant from the hallowed spot on the hillside; he is, however, said to have lost a limb in so doing, as a just retribution for his act of sacrilege. It is a shoot from the original plant which now grows in the precincts of Glastonbury Abbey.

Five miles south-west of Lancaster there is a lovely and peaceful little village, the Sunderland of Lancashire. Beside one of the houses there is a black poplar which sways gently in the breeze, high over the roof. Local tradition has it that this tree grew out of a seed taken from the first crop of cotton which was brought over to England from America. Naturalists may well smile at this extravagant claim, but the inhabitants of the village cherish with deep pride this alleged memorial of the times when the foundations

## PHYSICAL CURIOSITIES

were laid of Lancashire's predominance in the world's cotton markets.

The largest maple tree is to be found in the cemetery at Boldre, in Hampshire, whereas the largest lime tree blossoms in the garden of Pitchford Hall, near Pitchford in Shropshire, on the estate belonging to Major-General Charles John Cecil.

It was in the year 1738 that the first larch was imported into Great Britain. Robert More brought it over from the Tyrol and planted it at Linley in Shropshire. But in 1918 national defence measures necessitated its being cut down.

The largest willow, with a girth of 26 feet at a height of five feet, is to be found at Haverholme Priory, near Ruskington in Lincolnshire, the seat of the Earl of Winchelsea and Uttingham. It was here that Thomas Beckett found shelter for a while.

To see the finest specimens of Scotch firs, one must go to Crucorney, Llanvihangel, a village in Monmouthshire, on the road between Abergavenny and Hereford. Here these graceful trees form an avenue. The tree was first introduced into England in the time of James I, at Bramshott Park, near Winchfield in Hampshire.

The wood of the tulip tree was chosen for the ink-stand which Napoleon I had made for the Pope Pius VII, and this interesting relic is now in the Wallace Collection, Hertford House, Manchester Square, London, W.1.

The Great White Horse cut out of the hillside lies on the slope of the Downs below the camp of Edington in Wiltshire. It commemorates King Alfred's victory at the Battle of Ethandun in 878, a decisive battle in which the Danes were conquered; their king and 29 of his followers were baptised thereafter. The horse, which is a conspicuous feature of the landscape, measures 180 feet from head to tail and stands 107 feet high from the shoulder to the hoof. The one eye measures 25 feet across.

One of the many attractive features of Hampton Court Palace, is the famous Hampton Court Vine, which was planted in the year 1768 by the chief gardener, "Capability" Brown. Its stem now measures 38 inches round and the main branches are 110 feet long. The average yield is 1,200 pounds of grapes. The vine is planted inside a large lean-to house. The grapes are sent to supply Her Majesty's table.

The loveliest anenomes are to be found in Tubularia, a cave, near the Gouliot Caves on the coast of Sark, Channel Isles. But the cave is accessible only at low tide.

In Britain there are three places where it is still possible to find red deer in their natural untamed state. The first is the picturesque valley of Martindale, in Westmorland, on the slopes which lie between Kidsty Pike and the Ullswater Hills. A second is the

## 1,000 CURIOSITIES OF BRITAIN

great National Park of Gowbarrow in Cumberland, ten miles south of Keswick; and the third is Exmoor Forest on the borders of Devon, a tract of country whose wild beauty has been made famous through Blackmore's novel, "*Lorna Doone*."

Remains of ancient British cattle are to be seen at Cadzow Forest, near Glasgow, and in Chillingham Park, near Wooler, the seat of the Earl of Tankerville in North Northumberland, which lies on the River Till, six miles south-west of Belford.

The rarest sea shells to be found in Britain are those on the shore of the peninsula of Mochras, by Cardigan Bay in Merioneth, three miles south-west of Harlech.

The largest colony of herons in Britain, comprising some 150 nests, is to be found in the park of Milton Hall, near the village of Castor in Northamptonshire, on the estate belonging to William Thomas George Wentworth Fitzwilliam, M.F.H., J.P. The park covers an area of about seven hundred acres and lies along the Peterborough road. The first pair of herons settled there about a century ago.

In Partick, a suburb of Glasgow, one finds a petrified wood—a fossilised grove, called Victoria Park.

In the village of Brooke, on the Isle of Wight, there is a pine forest—but it is visible only at low tide.

In the Salt Museum, at Northwich, in Cheshire, one may see specimens of salt from all over the world.

The Museum at Blackgang Chine on the Isle of Wight houses the skeleton of a huge whale which was washed ashore at Totland Bay in the year 1840.

At Charnworth, in Dorset, in the year 1811, the famous woman geologist, Mary Anning, discovered, among other interesting prehistoric remains, an ichthyosaurus, plesiosaurus and rhinoceros.

The last wolf on English soil was killed in 1600, on Humphrey Head, a promontory, near Kent's Bank, on Morecombe Bay, in the north of Lancashire. In the chancel of the Church of St. Mary at Orlingbury, in Northamptonshire, four miles south of Kettering, there is an insignificant effigy-tomb, marking the last resting place of Jock of Batsaddle, the man who killed the last wolf in these islands. But his long undisputed claim to this title was challenged in the winter of 1936-37, when a wolf escaped from its cage in an Oxford zoo. Excitement and dismay grew as the number of its victims amongst the Oxfordshire flocks rose, and it was not until they reached the grim number of thirteen that the wolf was finally killed. But the name of this modern sportsman was modestly withheld.

In the Museum at Carmarthen, South Wales, one may see, mounted on a wooden board, the three canine pads of a British wolf—the last surviving traces of the species in these islands. It

## PHYSICAL CURIOSITIES

is believed that this zoological curiosity is over four hundred years old.

To enumerate the most beautiful gardens of this country would be a hard task and to choose them from the host of veritable paradises would be to make invidious distinctions. For our purpose, therefore, only those which have some curious feature to offer will be mentioned.

The largest fig-garden in Great Britain is at West Tarring, near Worthing in Sussex, twelve miles west of Brighton. Here it was that eight hundred years ago Thomas Beckett chose to have his fig orchards planted.

Ribston Hall, near Harrogate in the West Riding of Yorkshire, has become famous through the delicious Ribston Pippin apple, which is now in world-wide demand.

The loveliest cunninghamia may be seen in the flower garden at Penrhyn Castle. There is also a most beautiful *Semper virens* from the Himalayas. The garden is seven miles long and lies near the village of Llandegai, on the Menai Straits, in Carnarvonshire.

Sutton Coldfield, on the road to Lichfield in Warwickshire, is deservedly famous on account of the unique hollies in Sutton Park.

Among the world's most beautiful gardens must be numbered those of Tresco, in the Scilly Isles. Major A. A. Dorrien-Smith, the owner of these islands, is one of the foremost cultivators of narcissus in the whole world, and his flowers are eagerly sought in the flower markets in spring. In the Abbey Garden are collected some of the world's rarest plants: New Zealand flax, the Chinese paper plant, giant ferns, bananas, pepper bushes from Van Dieman's Land, eucalyptus, Norfolk Island pines, the *Fourcroya longaeve*, which grows to a height of 30 feet, and which has never flourished elsewhere in the British Isles.

The finest examples of topiary art in Britain are to be seen in the gardens at Levenshall, near Heversham in Westmorland, five miles south of Kendal. The gardens were laid out in the time of James I, by French gardeners, under the direction of Monsieur Beaumont, who was also responsible for the Hampton Court gardens.

At Levenshall, which formerly was the seat of the Bellinghams, are to be seen some of the finest of his productions.

It was beside the pond in Nonsuch Park, at Cheam, at the foot of the Banstead Downs, twelve miles from London, in mid-Surrey, that the first six lilies ever reared in England were grown.

Teddesley Park, at Cannock Chase, east of the town of Cannock in Staffordshire, is a veritable wonder-park, but connoisseurs have, with one consent, awarded the title of queen of all beautiful gardens in Great Britain to Chatsworth, on the Derwent, near Rowsley in north Derbyshire. It belongs to the Duke of Devonshire and



has for long been the seat of the Cavendish family. To quote the words of one who is well versed in this subject, "There is no other park throughout the whole of England that can compare with it in variety of scenery." The estate, including Chatsworth House, with its grand collection of pictures, books and sculpture, is twelve miles in extent, covers an area of 12 acres, and, in a beautiful natural setting, possesses a wonderful orangery and an exquisite fountain, which alone brings this estate into the very front rank of the world's gardens, rivalling in loveliness even those of Versailles.

## CHAPTER XV

### CURIOUS CUSTOMS

JANUARY I

**N**EW Year's Day is a holiday throughout the whole of Europe, with the exception of England, Wales, Northern Ireland and Russia. Beyond the confines of Europe it is not observed as a holiday on the Island of Bermuda, in all European colonies in Africa, Liberia and in every country and all colonies of North, Central and South America, in all parts of Asia (with the exception of the Hedjaz and China) and in Australasia and Oceania.

An old English rule for this morning requires one to look with especial care at the first man one meets on leaving the house. Should he be dark-haired, then the year will be a happy one: should he be fair or red-haired, then one must be most cautious in making plans. Unfortunately the British Pythia gives no clue as to what is to be expected if the first person one meets as one goes out on this morning is—bald-headed.

Children born on New Year's Day are regarded as especial blessings, since they are supposed to be the harbingers of seven years of good fortune for the whole household.

In Devonshire, on January 1st, the Wassail Bowl is carried from house to house by two men. The derivation of the word "Wassail" is given as the Old English "wes hal," meaning "be thou whole," a form of salutation. The following words are sung as part of the ceremony:

A massy bowl, to deck the jovial day,  
Flash'd from its ample round a sunlike ray.  
Full many a cent'ry it shone forth to grace  
The festive spirit of th' Andarton race,  
As, to the sons of sacred union dear,  
It welcomes with lambs "wool" the rising year.

According to Wharton, the Wassail bowl is the same as Shakespeare's "Gossip Bowl" ("*A Midsummer Night's Dream*"), the ingredients being ale, nutmeg, sugar, toast and roasted crabs (*i.e.* wild apples).

At Westerham on the Darent, the birthplace of General James Wolfe (1728-59), a banquet is held annually in his honour.

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The first Monday in the year is called "Handsel Monday." In Scotland this day is a special day of rejoicing for the young peasant folk. It is the day on which they receive presents—the Scottish equivalent of the Christmas Box—from the older inhabitants of their village. It is celebrated with dancing and general festivities.

### THE FIRST MONDAY IN THE YEAR

JANUARY 5

The villagers in South Devon have a similar way of observing this evening: they go out with the farmers to the fields and are regaled with cider. But here no fires are lit. The centre of the ceremony is the most beautiful of the apple trees; and standing round it, before drinking the cider they sing in chorus:

Here's to thee, old apple tree,  
Whence thou mayst bud, and whence thou mayst blow!  
And whence thou mayst bear apples enow!  
Hats full! caps full!  
Bushel-bushel-sacks full!  
And my pockets full too! Huzza!

At midnight, on Old Christmas Eve, according to a century-old prophecy, the Holy Thorn of Glastonbury will once again burst forth into bloom.

There are two trees grown from the original Holy Thorn both at Glastonbury. The thorn *does* actually bloom *about* Xmastide.

### THE FIRST MONDAY AFTER OLD CHRISTMAS DAY

The first Monday after Old Christmas Day is known as Plough Monday. It is a reminder that it used to be the first day on which the farmers took up their work again in the fields, the day on which they resumed their ploughing. The plough was drawn in procession by the husbandmen, on this day. Thirty to fifty men, stripped to their shirts, which on this occasion are clean and white, with gay ribbons tied about their arms and shoulders in knots and bows and with ribbon-decked hats, draw the plough with ropes. The procession is headed by an old woman and a youth, known as the Bessy, and sometimes the leader is a "Fool." He also is decked with ribbons and wears skins, with a tail hanging behind, and runs ahead of the procession collecting money. A troop of musicians and Morris dancers brings up the rear.

JANUARY 17

OLD TWELFTH DAY EVE

There are still places in Britain where this night is celebrated

## CURIOUS CUSTOMS

by the farmers with the Wassail bowl, singing and dancing round the apple trees, as a means of ensuring a fruitful year.

At Edington, near Bridgwater, the Wassailers go round to the various houses on this evening, singing the following song :

Wassail, wassail, all round the town  
The cup is white, the ale is brown  
The cup is made of a good ash tree  
And the drink is made of the best barley.

Another song which is sung in chorus in the apple orchards runs as follows :

Oh, apple tree, oh, apple tree,  
We've come to wassail thee  
In hoping thou wilt bear  
For the Lord doth know where we shall be  
To be merry another year.  
So merry let us be  
Let every man drink his cup,  
And health to the apple tree.  
Oh, apple tree, oh, apple tree,  
We've come to wassail thee,  
To blow and to bear apples enow  
Hats full, caps full,  
Three bushel bags full,  
Barn-floors full, and a little heap under the stairs  
Hip, hip, hurrah !

Though these ceremonies have long since fallen into abeyance elsewhere, they are still carefully observed in the village of Carhamton, four miles west of Watchet, West Somerset, winding up with a special cider joy-cup and dance at midnight.

### JANUARY 23

At Lerwick, the principal town on the east coast of Mainland, in the Shetland Islands, on this day the Carnival of Up-Helly-Aa of the Norsemen is observed. In his entertaining book, "*The Folklore Calendar*" (published by Philip Allan in 1930), George Long describes the ceremonies connected with this festival. His work, incidentally, may be taken as the best survey of all the remarkable customs and observances of this sort which have been handed down to our own time. Of this one, he writes :

"The celebrations consist mainly of a great torchlight procession to Norse music, with magnificent figures of Vikings in full armour escorting the galley, named the Fragaeth. The vessel was 31½ feet long and six in the beam, and was mounted on a rubber-tyred

## 1,000 CURIOSITIES OF BRITAIN

motor-chassis. The lofty dragon's head rose  $8\frac{1}{2}$  feet above the platform and the tail  $7\frac{3}{4}$  feet, making about 12 feet in height from the ground. There were ten oars on each side, each painted blue with blades and fitted near the grip with a metal shield adorned with ravens, and a mast rose 15 feet above the platform."

JANUARY 26

### AUSTRALIA DAY

At St Dunstan in the East, near Bradford in the West Riding of Yorkshire, there is a special service on this day.

JANUARY 30

In commemoration of the death of Charles I, King of Great Britain and Ireland, who was executed on this day in 1649, those who hold his memory in reverence decorate the equestrian statue of him in Trafalgar Square.

FEBRUARY 2

### NEW CANDLEMAS

Candlemas comes between the 2nd of February—New Candlemas—and the 15th—Old Candlemas Day. It is the time of the blossoming of the first shy primroses. There is an old English rustic saying which runs:

If Candlemas-day be fair and bright  
Winter will have another flight.

And another:

February 2, bright and clear  
Gives a good flax-year.

Also:

On Candlemas-day  
Throw candle, and candlestick away.

And:

So far as the sun shines in the hall  
So far will the snow fall in the stall.

In the old village of Blidworth, in South Nottinghamshire, five miles south of Mansfield, after it had been in abeyance for many years, the old custom of the Blidworth "Rocking" was revived. On this occasion, the last baby boy to be baptised there is brought to the Church of St. Mary, which stands on a hill 500 feet above the village. Here the boy is dedicated at the altar and then placed in a cradle in the sanctuary and rocked.

February 2 is also the feast of St. Blaise, the Patron Saint of

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Woolcombers, who died a martyr's death in the year 316. In St. Etheldred's Church, Ely Place, Holborn, London, there are three services on this day at 1.15 p.m., 6 p.m. and 8 p.m. respectively: during them the "Benediction of the Throat" is pronounced, and the preacher prays: "May the Lord deliver you from the evil of the throat, and from every other evil."

### THE SEVENTH TUESDAY BEFORE EASTER

Shrove Tuesday.

This is the next Tuesday after the first new moon in the month of February, and thus the seventh Tuesday before Easter.

There are many old customs connected with this day. The cock-fighting, which used to be a special feature of it, has now been abolished everywhere. Originally this was the day on which full confession had to be made of all misdeeds—Confession Tuesday. Shrovetide was ushered in by a peal of bells: to this day, one may still hear the "Pancake Bells," as they are known in some places. But in our own day they are a summons, not to confession, but to the housewives, to remind them that it is time to make their pancakes.

At Hoddesdon, in Hertfordshire, there hangs an old curfew-bell, originally rung when all fires and candle-lights had to be extinguished. Now it rings every Shrove Tuesday at four o'clock, as a sign that all the inhabitants may now cook and eat their pancakes, until it rings next at eight o'clock in the evening, cook they must stop eating.

In the little market-town of Olney, in Buckinghamshire, which lies in the lovely valley of the Ouse, four and a half miles north of Newport Pagnall, the two chimes of the bells of the Church of SS. Peter and Paul are signals, the first time, for the people round about to commence their baking, and the second time for them to set to and eat their pancakes. This second peal is also the signal for all the girls in the village to run with their frying-pans to the Church, and there is a race to see who will be the first to serve her pancakes to the ringers, the winner being hailed as Pancake Champion.

This is the day too on which 20 pupils at Westminster School, in London, line up for the famous ceremony of "Tossing the Pancake." The prize for the boy who secures either the whole pancake or the largest fragment of it is a guinea, presented by the Dean, and the rites are not considered really complete unless the chef succeeds in tossing his pancake over a special beam high up in the roof.

At Langport, the children all take to school with them eggs with their names written on the shell. The eggs are all thrown into a sieve and roundly beaten—with the shells. If any egg

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succeeds in surviving this ordeal whole, the child to whom it belongs is proclaimed by his or her school-fellows the winner of the "Victor's Cap."

For a long time now, this has been a great day for football matches. The mediaeval custom of playing in the roadways survives to-day at Chester-le-Street, Durham, at Ashbourne in Derbyshire and in the market town of Atherstone in Warwickshire. At Scone, in Perthshire, there is a great match, Bachelors versus Married Men, which is played from two o'clock in the afternoon until sundown.

FEBRUARY 14

### ST. VALENTINE'S DAY

As everybody knows, Valentine was a priest in Rome who helped the Christians during the persecutions of Claudius. He was condemned to death in the year 270 A.D.

On this day, everyone sends a special letter or other form of greeting to their true love. But years and years of hard thinking and research have failed to disclose any clue to the connection between this custom and the martyrdom of Valentine. Nobody can explain it: possibly—probably, even—there never was any connection. It has been suggested that these greetings have their origin in the fact that it is just about this day that the birds choose their mates.

"This is the day birds choose their mate  
And I choose you if I'm not too late."

Ophelia sings thus :

"To-morrow is St. Valentine's day  
All in the morning betime,  
And I a maid at your window  
To be your Valentine! "

The first person of the opposite sex whom you meet in the streets on the 14th of February is—according to one tradition—your future sweetheart. But this is a rather dangerous tradition. Unmarried maids and youths would do well on this day to look up and down the street carefully before venturing out of doors.

The cards which the postmen deliver on this day in millions, bear all manner of pretty verses, such as :

The rose is red, the violet blue,  
Carnation sweet, and so are you.  
And so is she who sends you this  
And when we meet we'll have a !

Or :

I'll be yours, if you'll be mine  
I'm your pleasing Valentine !

## CURIOUS CUSTOMS

### HOLY WEEK

Services at Westminster Cathedral, London.

### TUESDAY IN HOLY WEEK

Bach's Passion Music at St. Paul's Cathedral, London.

### MAUNDY THURSDAY

Distribution of Maundy Money at Westminster Abbey in London.

Two Yeomen of the Guard assist at this ceremony, one of them a Sergeant, the other carrying a golden dish containing purses of specially coined Maundy Money in number equal to the years of the King's age. These purses are given to the poor by the King or his representative.

### GOOD FRIDAY

Distribution of Widows' Doles at St. Bartholomew's, London.

### EASTER SUNDAY

Parade of the Warders Extraordinary of the Guards in the Tower of London.

In some Yorkshire villages the children go up into the hills on Easter Sunday morning with gaily coloured eggs, which they roll down into the valleys below.

### EASTER MONDAY

This is observed as Bank Holiday—except in Scotland. It is also the occasion of the giving of the Bidden Dole at the White House at Biddenden, near Maidstone in Kent. This custom of doling out bread, cheese and Biddenden cakes at 10 o'clock in the morning dates from the time of Siamese-twin sisters, Eliza and Mary Chaukhurst, who lived here in 1560. Eliza died at the age of 34, and of course they wanted to take Mary away from her, but she refused to be moved, saying that she had always stood beside her sister when alive, and now that Eliza was dead she would not be parted from her. And six hours later she followed her beloved sister. They left for the benefit of the poor, a piece of land, whose value is devoted to the special fund for this strange charity.

### TUESDAY IN THE WEEK AFTER EASTER MONDAY

Tutti-men's parade at Hungerford.

This ceremony is carried out in commemoration of the day on which John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, assured the fishing rights of this city. The horn which he presented to the inhabitants



on that auspicious occasion may still be seen in the Town Hall. In the 17th century, a copy was made of this horn and used in the yearly celebrations. The Town Crier, dressed in his tall hat and uniform, comes out onto the balcony of the Corn Exchange at eight o'clock and gives a blast on this horn as a signal for the festivities to begin.

The Town Crier: "All ye commoners of the Borough and Manor of Hungerford are requested to attend your Court House at the Hall at nine o'clock this morning to answer your names, on penalty of being fined. God save the King!"

One of the greatest present-day authorities on British customs, George Long, describes these ceremonies in his book, already cited, the "*Folklore Calendar*," and we cannot do better than quote his graphic description:

"At nine the Court of Feoffment sits. This is really an ancient manorial court, the twelve members of which (called Feoffees) are elected citizens, who act as Lords of the Manor in dealing with fishing and common rights. Persons claiming such rights have to attend and make good their case. They also let part of the fishing to clubs, which are a valuable source of revenue to the town, and give the townsfolk an opportunity of sharing in their own amenities. This is a real advantage, as on some other rivers possessing good fishing, the old inhabitants complain that the monopolistic policy of the millionaires' trout fishing clubs has actually deprived the people of their own rights. The wealthiest and most monopolistic of these clubs has actually adopted a policy of buying up all the little bits of second rate fishing which were formerly enjoyed by local inhabitants, not in order to fish them, but to prevent anybody else doing so. . . .

"Meanwhile the two elected Tutti-men of the day attend at the Constable's house to receive the Tutti-poles. Tutty means a nosegay, and the poles have a garland at the top. Each is about the size of a broomstick, handsomely decorated with streamers of coloured ribbons and having a nosegay of bright flowers and an orange at the top. . . ."

"The Tutti-men make the round of the town, and by the ancient law they are entitled to demand a kiss from every female they meet, or in default a fine of one penny is paid by the reluctant fair. I have followed them closely but I have never seen any money paid."

And thus the ceremony proceeds. The election of the various officials is held in the Town Hall. Every year, on this day, there is a special luncheon at the Three Swans Hotel, and punch is served. After which let George Long proceed with his narrative:

"The loyal toasts have been drunk, and on the table are long

## CURIOUS CUSTOMS

churchwarden pipes by the bushel for those who favour them, with the more modern cigars or cigarettes for those who do not.

"The Chairman rises: 'Gentlemen, I am informed that there are strangers present, so, according to our rules, we must shoe the colt.'"

And then the blacksmith appears, with his leather apron. To let you into a secret, in every-day life he has a totally different calling, but to-day he is a smith, complete with his hammer and his mate who carries a box of farrier's nails. Then he says: "First colt, please!" And with that, he takes the foot of the victim in both hands and, passing it between his legs, holds it fast. Taking a nail from the farrier's box, he proceeds to hammer it with mighty strokes, until the victim cries "Punch," and is then allowed to go, on payment of a small fine of about ten shillings, which goes to pay for drinks all round.

When this part of the ceremonies is over, it is the children who claim attention. They are given presents of oranges, and the day continues to its close amid dancing and singing and general jubilation.

### MARCH 1

#### ST. DAVID'S DAY

This is a Welsh holiday, commemorating a great victory over the Saxons. During the course of the battle, at the direction of St. David, the Welshmen put leeks into their hats as a means of distinguishing themselves from their enemies. This is the origin of the present-day custom.

St. David, of course, is the patron saint of Wales. He was the son of Zantus, Prince of Cardiganshire and became a priest, ministering on the Isle of Wight. Subsequently he became Archbishop of Menevia, and founded no less than twelve monasteries. He died in the year 544 and St. Kentigern saw how his soul was taken into heaven by angels.

There are those who assert that this custom of wearing the leek had its origin in Druidical times.

### MARCH 17

#### ST. PATRICK'S DAY

This is a great festival in Ireland. St. Patrick is the Patron Saint of Ireland. He was born in the fourth century, between Dumbarton and Glasgow, and at the age of 17 he was sold as a slave in the hills of Ireland, whence he escaped and started preaching Christianity. He died, after a life which brought blessing and happiness to many, on the 17th of March in the year 461 at Down, in Ulster. The anniversary of his death is observed as

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a solemn Holyday by the Catholic Church, and is also a day of great festivities in Dublin. The rich give bounties to the poor; the streets are gaily decorated with flags, churchbells ring merrily and everyone wears a bit of shamrock, the immortal green. The dancing and singing is carried on far into the night—in fact to the next morning, and it is a jolly time for all, but most particularly for the young. The following song is especially connected with this day:

Saint Patrick's the holy and tutelar man.  
His beard down his bosom like Aaron's ran:  
Some from Scotland, from Wales, will declare that he came,  
But I care not from whence now he's risen to fame:  
The pride of the world and his enemies scorning,  
I will drink to St. Patrick, to-day, in the morning!  
He's a desperate big, little Erin go brah,  
He will pardon our follies and promise us joy  
By the mass, by the Pope, by St. Patrick, so long  
As I live, I will give him a beautiful song!  
No saint is so good, Ireland's country adorning;  
Then hail to St. Patrick, to-day, in the morning!

### MARCH 31

Distribution of oranges and lemons at St. Clement Danes, Strand, London.

### APRIL 1

#### ALL FOOLS' DAY

This is the day on which one makes fools—through practical jokes—even of one's best friends. This old custom, which is observed far beyond the confines of Britain, provided it is tactfully practised, causes much merriment.

On the first day of April  
Hunt the gowk another mile!

"Gowk" is probably cuckoo, and hunting the gowk is the term for making April Fools. Often one who is sent on a fool's errand is called an "April gowk." Metaphorically used, a gowk is a fool.

One of the traditional rhymes connected with this day runs thus:

Twelve o'clock is gone a-past  
You're the biggest fool at last;  
Twenty shillings make a pound,  
You're the biggest fool in the town,  
Four farthings make a penny,  
You're the biggest fool of any.

## CURIOUS CUSTOMS

### DAFFODIL SUNDAY

Excursions to Kew Gardens, near London.

### APRIL 14

#### FIRST CUCKOO DAY IN SUSSEX

There are many jolly songs connected with this day.

### APRIL 23

Shakespeare's birthday, and day of Shakespeare anniversary celebrations at Stratford-on-Avon.

St. George's Day.

On this day the Annual Service of the Order of St. Michael and St. George is held at St. Paul's Cathedral, London. St. George the Martyr, is of course, the Patron Saint of England. He is believed to have been a soldier in Cappadocia; his famous victorious fight against the dragon is well known, but the fact that he followed this up by embracing Christianity is probably not so well known. On April 23, 303, he was executed at Nicomedia, on account of his work and preaching for the Faith. This day was elevated to the rank of a second-class Holyday by the Consilium of Oxford in 1922.

### APRIL 25

#### ANZAC DAY

On this day Australian war graves are decorated, and a special service is held in the Church of St. Clement Danes, London.

### MAY 1

#### LABOUR DAY

Processions to Hyde Park, London.

May Day Celebrations.

These are very widespread. In Oxford at five o'clock in the morning, the Choir of Magdalen College climbs to the top of the College Tower and sings the Latin hymn, "Te Deum Patrem Colimus," also known as the "May Song." Then the bells start to chime, and the people throng the streets.

In many places the Maypole is still erected. One of the traditional songs sung while dancing round the Maypole is given in Spenser's "*Shepherd's Calendar*."

"Youths folke now flocken in everywhere  
To gather May-buskets, and smelling breere;  
And home they hasten, the postes to dight,  
And all the kirke pillars, ere daylight,  
With hawthorne buets, and sweet eglantine,  
And girlonds of roses, and soppes in wine."

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Herrick, too, sung most lyrically of the First of May :

“The Maypole is up,  
Now give me the cup,  
I'll drink to the garlands around it;  
But first unto those  
Whose hands did compose  
The glory of flowers that crown'd it.”

### FIRST SATURDAY IN MAY

This is the day chosen for crowning the May Queen on Hayes Common, near Bromley in Kent, at Knutsford, Cheshire and elsewhere. Here again a procession forms the central feature of the festivities, this time headed by the newly-elected May Queen, dressed in regal robes, with a crown—albeit of tinsel—on her head. The “master of ceremonies” is the “Prince of Merrie England”—in real life the last year's May Queen.

### FIRST MONDAY IN MAY

Opening of the Royal Academy in London.

### MAY 5—7

Eskdale Tournament of Song, at Whitby, North Riding of Yorkshire.

### MAY 8

#### FLORA DAY

Furry Dance in the streets of Helston, Cornwall.

This custom is said to date from pre-Roman times, and has been handed down from then to now.

### MAY 18

Beating Seabounds and Blessing Fishing Trawlers and Nets at Tynemouth, in Northumberland.

### MAY 20

At the seaside resort of Whitby in the North Riding of Yorkshire (described as being “designed by nature for ideal holidays”) the festival of the “Planting of the Penny Hedge,” which dates from old monastic times, is still observed.

### CHESTNUT SUNDAY

Excursions to Bushey Park, near London.

### MAY 23

#### EMPIRE AIR•DAY

Civil and military aerodromes are open to the public.

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### MAY 24 EMPIRE DAY

#### MAY 25

Beating the Bounds at St. Clement Danes, Strand, London.

But the day has another association, as the anniversary of the restoration of the monarchy by Charles II in 1660. On this day this king's partisans decorate his statue and also wear oak leaves in their hats in memory of the monarch's lucky escape from his pursuers when he hid in the Boscobel Oak.

In the Royal Hospital, Chelsea, the home of English army pensioners, this day is marked by a special service.

#### AMERICAN MEMORIAL DAY

Service and decoration of 450 American war graves at Brookwood Cemetery, Surrey.

#### END OF MAY

Chelsea Flower Show, at Chelsea, London.

Royal Naval and Military Tournament at Olympia, London.

#### WHIT MONDAY

This is a special occasion at Little Dunmow, two miles south-east of Great Dunmow, on the left bank of the Chelmer, in West Essex. Here the world-famous ceremony of the awarding of the Dunmow Flitch takes place.

This institution dates from the 13th century, when it was introduced by Robert FitzWalter, Third Baron Fitzwalter, one of the nobles who was especially associated with the enactment of the Magna Carta. It was first performed in 1244. By its provisions, any married couple who, "kneeling on two sharp-pointed stones" in the churchyard, swore that they had "not repented them, sleeping or waking, of their marriage in a year and a day" had the right to claim for themselves a flitch of bacon from the prior and canons of Little Dunmow.

\* The claims are examined by a jury consisting of five spinsters, and the oath is administered in the following terms :

You shall swear by custom of confession,  
If ever you made nuptial transgression,  
Be you either married man or wife  
If you have brawls or contentious strife  
Or otherwise at bed or at board,  
Offended each other in deed or word,  
Or since the Parish Clerk said amen,  
You wish'd yourselves unmarried again,  
Or, in a twelvemonth and a day,  
Repented not in thought any way,

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But continued true in thought and desire  
As when you joined hands in the quire.  
If to these conditions without all feare  
Of your own accord you will freely sweare  
A whole gammon of bacon you shall receive,  
And bear it hence with love and good leave,  
For this is our custom at Dunmow well knowne,  
Though the pleasure be ours, the bacon's your own.

The old chair in which the happy couples used to take the oath, in the Church of St. Mary the Virgin, is still to be seen there and is still used to this day.

Whit Monday is observed as Bank Holiday throughout Great Britain, with the exception of Scotland. In Regent's Park, London, there is always a Cart Horse Parade on this day. The Royal Mausoleum in the Little Park, Windsor, which contains the graves of Queen Victoria and other members of the Royal Family, is thrown open to the public.

### WHIT TUESDAY

This is Children's Day, a special holiday for Sunday School and Church School children. It is celebrated with processions of children in their Sunday best, carrying flowers and flags and with special songs and services in the churches. All sorts of games are played, and sweets distributed.

The Gaskell Recreation Ground, Linden Field, near the railway station of Wenlock, 11 miles south of Wellington, in Shropshire, has an area of nine acres, and includes a bowling green, cricket and football grounds and lawn tennis courts it is approached by an avenue of lime trees. Here "Olympic Games," including tilting at the ring, are held.

### FIRST SUNDAY IN JUNE RHODODENDRON SUNDAY

This is the great day for excursions to the places where rhododendrons can be seen in special profusion, notably Richmond Park and Kew Gardens.

### BETWEEN 5 AND 11

In the manufacturing town of Hawick, in Roxburghshire, Scotland, fifty miles south-east of Edinburgh, this is the day of the ceremony of "Riding the Marches." It commemorates the unexpected victory at the Battle of Flodden in the year 1514. At the village of Hornshole, two and a half miles below the city, a troop of English soldiers were surprised, while asleep, massacred almost to the last man, and their colours captured. Every year the

## CURIOUS CUSTOMS

celebrations begin with the Colour Bussing. A flag—a faithful copy of one of the original colours which are kept carefully in the Town Hall—is brought by a young man—the cornet—at the head of a long procession to the Town Hall and there handed over to the Provost. On the following morning, a festal breakfast is held at the Tower Hotel in Hawick, accompanied by the singing of old ballads and speechifying. Then the procession reforms, the Cornet with his flag at the head, marching between the last year's Cornet on the left, and that of the previous year on the right. There are then sports and the day ends with the Cornet's Ball. Here songs are sung in chorus, and Scottish reels danced. Towards four o'clock the next morning the whole company go out together to the moat, where they wait to greet the sunrise with old-time hymns.

On the subsequent morning, the procession, with the Cornet at the head, again forms, and then the festivities spread throughout the town and the district, and the victory of 1514 is again celebrated by athletic contests and games. A grand banquet, to which most of the leading local people are bidden, winds up the celebrations.

### JUNE 11

In the market town of Lanark, in Lanarkshire, Scotland, Lanimar Day is observed. It is here, under a two-hundred-year-old oak, that one may see the world-famous "Lee Penny" stone. The possession of this stone was believed to confer healing virtues on the owner. Incidentally, it is believed to have inspired Sir Walter Scott's famous book, "*The Talisman*."

### JUNE 14—21

Carnival at Blackpool, Lancashire.

### JUNE 16

Riding the Marches at Linlithgow in West Lothian, Scotland.

### JUNE 17—20

March Riding and Beltane Festival at Peebles in Scotland.

### JUNE 22

This is the day on which the Druids meet together at Stonehenge, under the leadership of the Chief Druid. These boulders were a temple used some two thousand years ago for the worship of the Sun-god. On this morning, when the sun rises, a special Summer Solstice Service is held, during which the priest prays :

"God, our all-Father, permanent amid all change art Thou. Thou hast ever been, and as Thou art, so shalt Thou ever be. We seek and find in Thee the glory of the Dawn. We seek and find



## 1,000 CURIOSITIES OF BRITAIN

Thee when the darkness of the night has fled. The sleep of faith has ever led through night to dawn. Amen."

### JUNE 24

Procession of the Knights of the Hospitaller Order of Jerusalem, St. John's Church, Clerkenwell, London.

Sheriff's Meetings in the Great Hall of the Guildhall, London.

British Empire Garden Party at Roehampton, London.

### JULY 1

#### DOMINION DAY

### JULY 5

Old Midsummer Day at Tynwall Hill, Isle of Man.

The holding here by the Vikings of their "Thing," is a survival of a custom from ancient times.

After holding a special service, the procession moves off to the hill, headed by the Lieutenant Governor in official costume of the Island as representative of the King. All the officials of the church and state on the Island take part in the ceremony, which is described by George Long in his book, "*The Folklore Calendar*."

The Governor "mounts to the topmost platform, where he sits on a crimson velvet chair, looking eastwards, and with the sword of State laid before him. Beside him on another gaudy chair sits the Bishop, as last of the Barons of the Island, and the Deemsters and Council stand beside them. On the second platform stand the twenty-four members of the House of Keys (the world's smallest parliament), on the third the clergy, High Bailiffs and members of the Bar, and on the fourth or lowest platform the minor officials. Then the coroners, on bended knees, deliver to the Governor their wands of office and receive them back again, and the grandees march back to the Church."

### JULY 12

Orangeman's Day. Holiday in Northern Ireland.

On this day the Members of the Vintners' Company march in procession from their hall in Upper Thames Street to the Church of St. James Garlickhythe. The procession is headed by two wine-porters, wearing old-fashioned high hats and white smocks; behind them comes the imposing figure of the Beadle, in his black and gold livery, then the Stavesmen, Swanmarker and the Barge-master, and behind them the long procession of Members of the Company. Their route is strewn with sweet herbs and flowers.

## CURIOUS CUSTOMS

JULY 26

Pilgrimage to the summit of Croaghpatrick at Mayo, Irish Free State. This mountain is 2,510 feet high and lies four miles south-west of Westport, and it was on its summit that St. Patrick began his missionary crusade. The famous relics of his ministry are preserved up here; here too is the lake with its couple of sacred trout.

LAST SATURDAY IN JULY

At Ambleside, in the Lake District, the Rushbearing ceremony is performed with great pomp. (In neighbouring Grasmere it is observed on St. Oswald's Day.) The custom is recorded in "*Round and About Ambleside*," as follows:

"Records of rushbearing hereabouts go back to the 17th century, and its retention to-day serves to remind us of when the floors of the old churches were of uncovered earth, and it was the practice to spread on them a liberal layer of rushes.

"The surfaces of the floors were also very irregular owing to the habit of intra-mural burial, and it has been advanced by one versed in old practices that not only were these irregularities made less irksome with rushes, but that the custom of interring the dead within the walls also gave rise to the bringing into the church before service on Sundays in summer of sweet-smelling flowers.

"At a recent rushbearing the Bishop of the Diocese reminded the congregation that the ceremony recalled to them the fact that they were rendering back to God gifts, and that the great sacred edifices of the Middle Ages were monuments to the truth that our forefathers offered labour, skill and craftsmanship as gifts to God.

"Children play the major part in the celebrations nowadays. In olden times the rushbearers were rewarded with ale, for they were harvesters. To-day the children receive gingerbread and other suitable presents."

AUGUST 1—5

St. Wilfred's Feast and Procession at Ripon, in the West Riding of Yorkshire.

AUGUST 3

Carnival at Chester, Cheshire, and at Bexhill-on-Sea, Sussex.

AUGUST 11—12

Carnival at Bournemouth, Hampshire.

AUGUST 12

Carnival at Eastbourne, Sussex.

AUGUST 20

Old English Sports at Grasmere, Lake District, in North-West Westmorland.

Carnival at Teignmouth, South Devon.

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AUGUST 22

Riding of the Marches and Crowning of the Marymass Queen at Irvine, in Scotland.

SEPTEMBER 1—5

Carnival at Ryde, Isle of Wight.

FIRST MONDAY AFTER SEPTEMBER 4

At Abbots Bromley, in Staffordshire, on the road between Lichfield and Uttoxeter, stands the Church of St. Nicholas, in a side-chapel of which are to be seen reindeer's horns and a hobby-horse. On this day, these things are taken out of the church into the Market Place, for the century-old dance of the Hobby-horse, and the dancers tour the district. Twelve people take part in this dance, six of them wearing deer horns. One of the men, mounted on the hobby-horse, is Robin Hood, and another is dressed up as the Maid Marian. Another carries a cross-bow and arrows, and there is also a Fool, with two musicians. It is commonly believed that this quaint performance commemorates the granting of rights to hunt in the neighbouring Needwood Forest.

SEPTEMBER 12

Judges' Procession from Westminster Abbey to the House Lords, London.

SEPTEMBER 18

Birthday Supper in honour of Dr. Johnson at the "Th Crowns" Inn, Lichfield, Staffordshire.

LAST SUNDAY IN SEPTEMBER

Fish Harvest Festival at St. Magnus the Martyr, London.

OCTOBER 7

St. Denis's Day. Oyster Feast at Colchester.

OCTOBER 13

St. Edward's Day. Roman Catholic pilgrimage to the Shrine of Edward the Confessor, London.

OCTOBER 16

Lion Sermon at St. Katherine Cree Church, London.

OCTOBER 21—22

Oyster Feast at Colchester.

The old custom of celebrating the commencement of the oyster season has been revived at Colchester. The town celebrates the

## CURIOUS CUSTOMS

day with dances, games and all manner of jollity. In the Town Hall a festal banquet is held, with speeches.

From 1635 onwards the festivities took place on October 7 and 8, and on the 9 the Mayor and Corporation went through the town in procession. When the new calendar was introduced, the festival was put back eleven days. It falls to the Mayor—who regards it as a privilege—to defray the cost of the feast, except for a portion of the oysters which are provided by the Fishery Board; and it is the Mayor who issues the invitations. Now invitations have had to be confined to the principal ratepayers of the town, as there would be too many otherwise.

OCTOBER 21

TRAFALGAR DAY

Decoration of the Nelson Column in Trafalgar Square, London

OCTOBER 31

ALL HALLOW'S EVE

On All Hallow E'en it is the custom, especially in Ireland, to bob for apples—either diving for them, or catching them as they dangle on strings from a beam, a lighted candle being attached to the other end.

"This they do with their mouths only," we are told in the "*Every Day Book*"; "their hands being tied behind their backs." From the custom of flinging nuts into the fire, or cracking them with one's teeth, this is also known as "nutcrack night."

At St. Kilda, in the Outer Hebrides, a large, triangular cake is baked for the occasion, and this cake must all be eaten on the same night.

In Ireland and Wales, where Midsummer Even Fires are lighted—a relic of Druidism—one has also Hallow Even Fires burning, these too being a survival from those dim distant times.

NOVEMBER 1

In many places in England the custom of bobbing for apples is repeated on this day; also that of cracking nuts. In Ireland the day is observed by kindling special fires known as "Beal Teindh."

NOVEMBER 5

GUY FAWKES DAY

This day commemorates the unmasking of the gunpowder plot against King James I and his parliament, including the Prince of Wales and all the members of the Lords and Commons.

In the "*Common Book of Prayer*" we read :

"A Form of Prayer with Thanksgiving, to be used yearly upon

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the fifth day of November; for the happy deliverance of King James I and the three Estates of England, from the traitorous and bloodily-intended massacre by gunpowder: And also for the happy arrival of his late Majesty (King William III) on this day, for the deliverance of our Church and nation."

For days prior to the Fifth, children with painted faces may be seen parading the streets, uncouth figures known as Guys, and begging for pennies with which to buy fireworks for their celebrations on the night of the Fifth. They sing catches, usually a shortened form of the following:

Please to remember the fifth of November  
Gunpowder treason and plot;  
We know no reason why gunpowder treason  
Should ever be forgot!  
Holla boys! Holla boys!  
Huzza—a—a!  
A stock and a stake  
For King George's sake,  
A stock and a stump  
For Guy Fawkes' rump  
Holla boys! Holla boys!  
Huzza—a—a!

At the end of the day the children pile up their straw-filled Guys in the streets and burn them. They also let off fireworks, until the night resounds with shouts and the spluttering and banging of fireworks.

In many places large bonfires are lit out of doors. At Bridgwater in Somerset, and Lewes, in Sussex, there are special celebrations. Those at Lewes, in which the procession is a chief feature, have an almost religious character. There are six bonfire societies here and towards six o'clock in the evening their members all meet in front of the war memorial, on which they lay wreaths. There is a short prayer followed by a hymn. After eleven o'clock, the six societies go each to their special meeting place in different directions outside the city, and light their fires on which the effigies of the traitor Fawkes are burned.

### NOVEMBER 9

#### LORD MAYOR'S SHOW DAY

This is a London celebration. A long procession, in which the legendary figures of Gog and Magog—specially brought from their resting places in the Guildhall—figure prominently, goes through the city to Westminster. This is also the day on which the Civic

## CURIOUS CUSTOMS

head of the world's largest city—the Lord Mayor of London—is installed in office. A state banquet, attended by the civic and political leaders, crown the day.

NOVEMBER 11

### ARMISTICE DAY

This is the day of the solemn ceremony in honour of those who fell in the Great War, that in London being probably the most impressive of any of the countless services held throughout the world on this day. Services are held at many of the memorials in the metropolis, but the chief one is that at the Cenotaph in Whitehall, usually attended by the King, who lays his tribute at the foot of the flower-decked monument. But most impressive of all is the two minutes' silence, observed throughout the land at 11 a.m.

This is also St. Martin's Day, especially observed in Northumberland. A special feature of this day is the "black puddings" given as presents. For the purpose, a public collection is made for the purchase of a cow or other animal and the black puddings are made by filling the entrails with a special mixture of blood, suet and groats, boiled and then made up into the form of sausages. Their name is derived from their colour.

A strange custom connected with this day is still observed at the Knightlow Cross, at Stretton-on-Dunsmore, in Warwickshire, two and a half miles south of Brandon. Every Martinmas morning, at sunrise, the representative of the Duke of Buccleugh, Lord of the Manor, takes up his stand at a hollowed stone—all that remains of the Knightlow Cross—in a field near Knightlow Hill, on the Holyhead road. He comes to collect the dues paid by the inhabitants of the neighbouring hundred parishes, each of whom lays a penny or two on the stone. The Duke's agent makes a proclamation, demanding these legal dues, and also announcing that "in default of payment the forfeit would be twenty shillings for every penny, and a white bull with red ears and a red nose."

When the money has duly been collected, according to the old custom, the Duke's agent invites all those present to a festive breakfast.

NOVEMBER 13

Banquet in memory of the great philanthropist, Edward Colston, Bristol.

DECEMBER 6

St. Nicholas, the day on which the Boy Bishops are appointed.

## 1,000 CURIOSITIES OF BRITAIN

### DECEMBER 21 FESTIVAL OF ST. THOMAS

On this day, a yearly fair is held in many villages, and celebrated with dancing and singing. It is also known as Mumping Day (to mump is to beg), as on it beggars may beg with impunity.

“Christmas is comin’, the beef is getting fat,  
Please to put a penny in the old man’s hat.”

This is the song of the beggars, who find many to comply with their request at this season.

### DECEMBER 24 CHRISTMAS EVE

In many places this evening is observed by the giving of presents among friends and relatives.

In the hall at Magdalen College, Oxford, the first part of the “*Messiah*” is performed, together with a selection of carols.

This is the day, too, on which the Christmas Mummers have performed the last 12 centuries. They act the fight between St. George and the Dragon, the only extant pre-Reformation folk drama, in which the other characters are: the Bold Slasher, the Quack Doctor, the Lawyer, the Valiant Soldier and Twing Twang.

Before the actual performance, King John appears and goes about near the stage on which the Mummers are to give their play, singing:

“Here I am, little man Jan  
With my sword in my hand.  
If you don’t all do  
As you be told by I  
I’ll send ye all to York  
For to make apple pie!”

### DECEMBER 26 BOXING DAY

Special pantomime and circus at the Olympia, London.  
This is Bank Holiday except in Scotland.

### DECEMBER 31 NEW YEAR’S EVE. PUNCH NIGHT.

Church bells ring out the old year.

“Ring out the old,  
Ring in the new!”

